CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS

DC's CRISIS TEAM TALKS!

WORLD-SHATTERING WORDS WITH --

MARV WOLFMAN & BOB GREENBERGER

COUNTDOWN TO THE CATACLYSMIC CLIMAX!

FROM SUNSET STRIP TO SYNDICATED STRIPS!

STAN DRAKE

CAREER OF A CARTOONIST FROM FILM TO THE FUNNIES

DC HEROES GAME DESIGNERS

SAM LEWIS & GREG GORDEN

KNOW ALL THE SECRETS--BUT ARE THEY TELLING?

#26

DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT'S

COMICS INTERVIEW

$2.25 $2.75 CANADA

Characters & art TM & © 1985 DC Comics Inc.

A FICTIONEER PUBLICATION

This guy is totally bored with comics!

We don't blame him.

CRASH. POW. THUD.

Reading the same old comics year after year *can* be boring. Very, very boring.

After a while you begin to worry – are you losing your sense of wonder?

You think maybe you're about to "outgrow" comics.

You're wrong.

Being bored with comics doesn't mean you've grown up. It just means you're reading the wrong comics.

You're ready to come over to Eclipse Comics. New heroes. Modern stories. Award-winning writers and artists who do more than CRASH, POW and THUD their way through stale, recycled plots. Full-process laser-scanned colors. State-of-the-art offset printing on magazine-quality white paper. And because all Eclipse Comics are creator-owned, we will never send in second-string writers or artists to louse up continuity or damage the characters you love.

ECLIPSE COMICS™

Before you lose your sense of wonder.

©1984 Eclipse

GREAT GUNS, MAN!
YOU SAY YOU DON'T HAVE MY Mr. MONSTER SUBSCRIPTION? THAT'S DANGEROUS TALK, SIR!!!
N..NOW, DOC-- YOU KNOW YOUR CONTINUING SERIES IS BI-MONTHLY, AND THE N-NEXT ISSUE ISN'T DUE UNTIL NEXT M-MONTH!
B...BUT YOU CAN PASS THE TIME UNTIL THEN WITH THESE OTHER V...VERY FINE ECLIPSE TITLES...
Please?
NEXT MONTH, HUH?! O.K. TOSS ME A MIRACLEMAN, POP... AND PRONTO!!
CLICK
DOC. STEARN
DIRECT SALES QUALITY AT NEWSSTAND PRICES-12 ISSUES!
☐ MIRACLEMAN ($9.00)
☐ DNA AGENTS ($9.00)
☐ LASER ERASER AND PRESSBUTTON ($9.00)
☐ ROBO-HUNTERS ($15.00)
DELUXE COMICS 6 ISSUES @ $10.50
☐ ALIEN ENCOUNTERS
☐ TALES OF TERROR
☐ MR. MONSTER
☐ JOHNNY NEMO ☐ CROSSFIRE
☐ MASKED MAN ☐ SUN-RUNNERS
TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____
NOT NECESSARY TO CLIP OUT OF COMIC IF YOU PRINT NEATLY ON ANOTHER PIECE OF PAPER!
MAIL TO: ECLIPSE COMICS
81 DELAWARE STREET
STATEN ISLAND, NY 10304
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP _____
POSTMAN! YES! I'VE ORDERED EITHER A 12 ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION OR TWO 6-ISSUE SUBS. PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING COMIC OF MY CHOICE: * _____
(* YOU CAN EITHER HAVE YOUR SUB EXTENDED, OR PICK A CURRENT (NOT BACK ISSUE) OF AN ECLIPSE COMIC)
HOLD STAMP OUT MONSTERS
MR. MONSTER SAYS:
DON'T BE A CHUMP!!
ORDER A 12 ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION (OR TWO 6 ISSUE SUBS) AND GET A FREE ECLIPSE COMIC (and a free ECLIPSE EXTRA every month) !!!
©MICHAEL T. Gilbert ©1985

SUBSCRIPTION-PLUS COMICS COMPANY
POST OFFICE BOX 40428
RALEIGH, N.C. 27629 (919) 846-9622

Famous since 1983

Our order form for items coming

out in August had a selection

of 507 items !!!

WHAT DID YOU MISS ? ? ?

25% to 40% discount with the
best packing in the business.

Ron

ADVERTISEMENT

The first history of modern comic book heroes

From the sci-fi 50's to the camp 60's all the way to the 80's—DC and Marvel heroes, Superman, Spider-Man, the Flash, the Fantastic Four and all the other hunks, hulks and heavyweight heroes who've clouted their way through the comics world! Plus behind-the-scenes looks at the men who drew, wrote and published them!

Illustrated. Paperbound, $11.95, now at your bookstore, or use coupon to order.

THE FIRST HISTORY OF MODERN COMIC BOOKS
COMIC BOOK
THE HEROES
FROM THE SILVER AGE TO THE PRESENT
WILL JACOBS AND GERARD JONES

CROWN PUBLISHERS Inc.

CROWN PUBLISHERS, Inc., Dept. 732
34 Engelhard Ave., Avenel, N.J. 07001

Please send me THE COMIC BOOK HEROES. I enclose my check or money order for $11.95 plus 1.50 postage and handling charge. If I wish, I may return the book within ten days for full refund.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

N.Y. and N.J. residents, add sales tax.

DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT'S
COMICS INTERVIEW

SPOTLIGHT:
CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS
pat o'neill pumps writer *marv wolfman* and co-conspirator *bob greenberger* for the poop
6

ARTIST:
STAN DRAKE
part one of a devilish interview with *shel dorf*
27

GAMING:
SAM LEWIS & GREG GORDEN
mayfair games masterminds tell *darrel boatz* all about the *dc heroes role- playing game*
42

FAN IN THE FAMILY:
JOSH & LARRY JONES
outside-the-industry perspective
56

LETTERS:
THE LAST WORD
readers talk back -- and who shall say them nay?
61

DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT
editor/publisher

conceived by:
JIM SALICRUP
editorial and design consultant

BILL CHADWICK
production poobah reprise

LESLEY BENJAMIN-AULL
managing editor emeritus

DARREL L. BOATZ
associate editor excellentus

SHEL DORF
PAT O'NEILL
contributing editors

RICK JAGUS
JACKIE HUTCHINSON
typesetting

David Anthony Kraft's **COMICS INTERVIEW #28** 1985. Published monthly by Fictioneer Books Ltd., Suite 301, 234 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10001. Copyright© 1985 Fictioneer Books Ltd. All rights reserved. **SUBSCRIPTIONS:** $24 for twelve issues. CANADA, MEXICO & FOREIGN **(U.S. funds only):** $30 for twelve. Any statements made in this magazine, express or implied, are solely those of the individuals being interviewed and do *not* represent the editorial position of the publisher, who accepts no responsibility for such statements.

cover by:
GEORGE PEREZ
pencil art
DICK GIORDANO
ink art

"Some of the biggest changes will occur

CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS

The editorial office shared by Bob Greenberger, Alan Gold — and sometimes Barbara Randall and Marv Wolfman — at DC Comics headquarters (the eighth floor of 666 Fifth Avenue in New York City) is cramped, cluttered, and too small for the number of people who use it. In short, not very different from the office Bob and I once shared as editor and managing editor of COMICS SCENE. As the interview began, in addition to Bob, Marv and myself, free-lance editor Ross Andru was also using the space, and Randall, Denys Cowan and others drifted in and out. Toward the end of the talk, Len Wein — one of the initiators of the CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS, and editor of its sister project, WHO'S WHO IN THE DC UNIVERSE — joined the group.

PATRICK DANIEL O'NEILL: *Let's start right off with something really controversial. The two biggest things that people are talking about, in relation to CRISIS, are the death of Supergirl and the related cancellation of THE FLASH, and the retirement of that character. Were those things planned from the very beginning?*

MARV WOLFMAN: Since this won't be coming out until...

BOB GREENBERGER: ... issue #9 is already out...

MARV: ... we can talk about the Flash.

BOB: He's dead.

MARV: He's dead. He's pushing up daisies. He's joined the choir invisible. He's bought the farm.

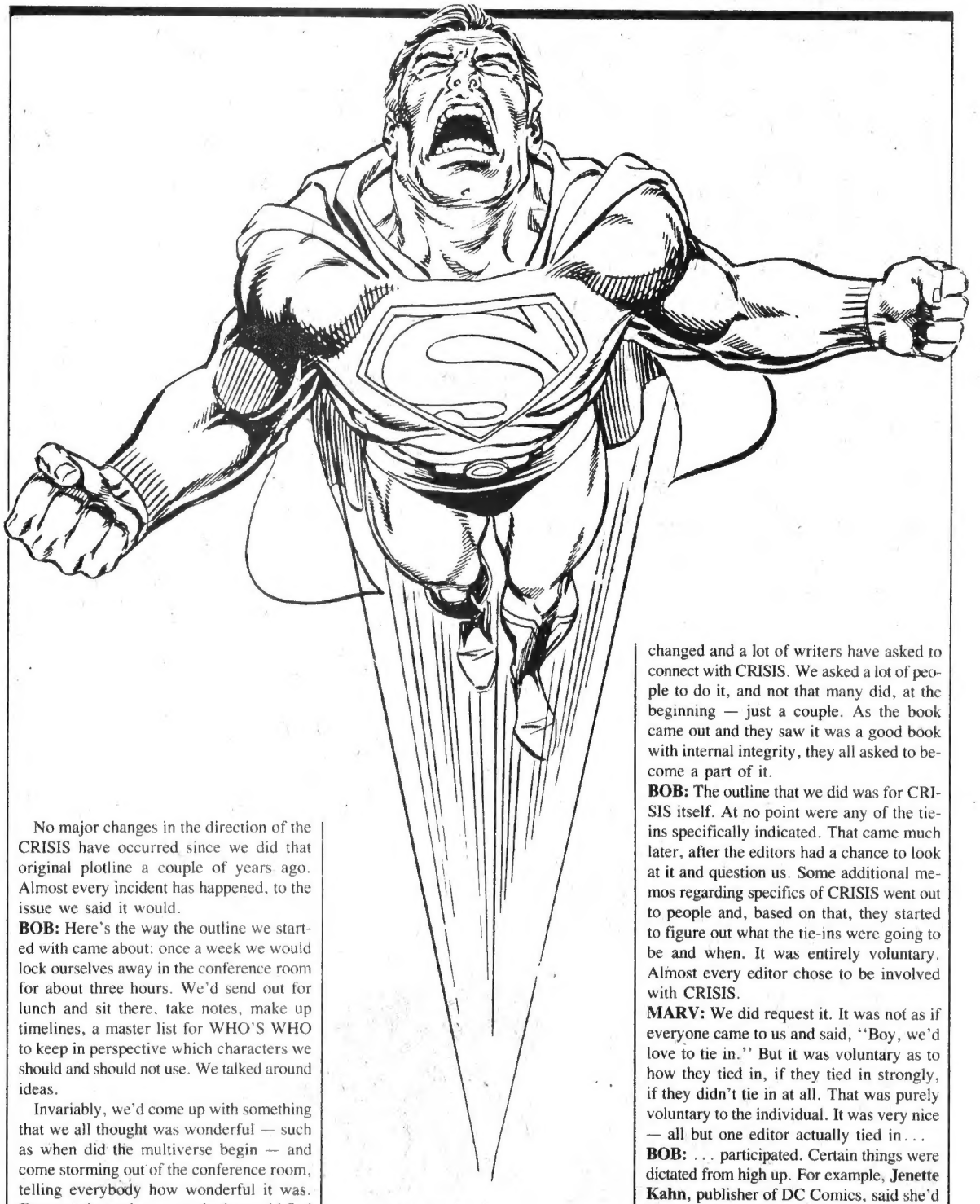
PAT: *He's a late hero.*

MARV: THE FLASH book hasn't done well since that man over there *(indicating Ross Andru on the couch)* left it as the editor. That's the last time it really did well. What's the question?

Oh yeah. My initial plot outline for the first ten issues — which Bob, Len and I worked out, two years ago — said that in issue #7 was the death of Supergirl and issue #8 was the death of the Flash. So they were set right from the beginning. Also, need I point out that the decision was made before the SUPERGIRL movie was released.

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

after CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS."



No major changes in the direction of the CRISIS have occurred since we did that original plotline a couple of years ago. Almost every incident has happened, to the issue we said it would.

BOB: Here's the way the outline we started with came about: once a week we would lock ourselves away in the conference room for about three hours. We'd send out for lunch and sit there, take notes, make up timelines, a master list for WHO'S WHO to keep in perspective which characters we should and should not use. We talked around ideas.

Invariably, we'd come up with something that we all thought was wonderful — such as when did the multiverse begin — and come storming out of the conference room, telling everybody how wonderful it was. Twenty minutes later, somebody would find the fallacy in it, and the next week we'd go back into the conference room to try again.

MARV: This was a long process before we finally worked out all the ramifications and the factual stuff. But once we did, and once that little overview plot was done, which was about two or three pages; just all the major incidents, no plot changes or twists — we've stuck to it pretty closely. We've added some incidents since then, because characters have changed and a lot of writers have asked to connect with CRISIS. We asked a lot of people to do it, and not that many did, at the beginning — just a couple. As the book came out and they saw it was a good book with internal integrity, they all asked to become a part of it.

BOB: The outline that we did was for CRISIS itself. At no point were any of the tie-ins specifically indicated. That came much later, after the editors had a chance to look at it and question us. Some additional memos regarding specifics of CRISIS went out to people and, based on that, they started to figure out what the tie-ins were going to be and when. It was entirely voluntary. Almost every editor chose to be involved with CRISIS.

MARV: We did request it. It was not as if everyone came to us and said, "Boy, we'd love to tie in." But it was voluntary as to how they tied in, if they tied in strongly, if they didn't tie in at all. That was purely voluntary to the individual. It was very nice — all but one editor actually tied in...

BOB: ... participated. Certain things were dictated from high up. For example, **Jenette Kahn**, publisher of DC Comics, said she'd like to see some of the costumes get changed, and specifically identified one of them. That costume was changed, but it had nothing to do with CRISIS. Jenette said, "Sometime this year, why don't you change that Black Canary outfit?" and it ended up

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

"It's curious that Marvel is busily creating

being done in GREEN ARROW, instead of CRISIS.

MARV: But the bigger things — the death of Supergirl or any of the other major deaths — all had to go through our front office. Obviously, even as a group we could not come in and say, "Let's kill off Supergirl." "Sure, why not? It'll make for a good story."

PAT: *When you made up a master list of big changes, like deaths, did you always have specific reasons why you wanted to do those particular things?*

MARV: Yes and no. Some of them because we felt the characters had outlived their usefulness, others because the books were being cancelled anyway, others because individual writers came to us and said, "We would like these changes made. Can you make them for us?" Every way you can possibly imagine a change being made is how we approached it.

In the case of Supergirl, it was decided that she wasn't functioning as a character, she wasn't helping Superman. She was hurting him in many ways, by taking away some of his specialness, as a character. And, again, unlike what a lot of fans think, it had nothing to do with the movie — because the movie hadn't even come out.

PAT: *How about the Flash? Which came first — the decision to cancel the title, or the decision to kill him off?*

MARV: I think they were simultaneous. I think issue #350 of THE FLASH was set to be the last one. I'm not positive — it may have been earlier, it may have been later.

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Marv Wolfman
Residence: Flushing, Queens, NY
Born: Brooklyn, NY
Occupation: Writer and Editor
Credits: TEEN TITANS, DRACULA, SPIDER-MAN, NIGHT FORCE — almost all the major characters at Marvel and DC at one time or another.
Pet Peeve: People who ask me if I like SECRET WARS, which I've never read.

The book may have stayed on even longer because of CRISIS.

BOB: Actually, in the Flash's case, we knew we wanted to...

MARV: His memory's much better than mine!

BOB: ... we knew the book was going to terminate at some time. I looked up at **Dick Giordano**, editor-in-chief, and said, "You know that #350 comes out at the height of the summer?" To which he replied, "That's as good a place as any to end the run." At that point, we then determined that any resolution to the character of the Flash — in the end, his death — would occur immediately after FLASH #350, within CRISIS.

MARV: Everyone had an opportunity to argue, or persuade people otherwise. In the case of Supergirl, **Paul Levitz**, the LEGION writer — and a vice-president here at DC — kept lobbying for Supergirl to be brought into the future and made a part of the Legion. Jenette overruled him. The decisions were really made from on high, even if we may have proposed the changes in the first place.

BOB: There was a long debate over whether we should just kill the Flash, or take away his powers as a result of his trial ôr the Crisis — and Barry Allen would live happily ever after, but not as the Flash. Make that a major change. We were worried that some people would try, somewhere down the line, if they were stuck for a plot, to say, "Let's bring Barry Allen back and give him back his powers, or different powers." We wanted it to be a definite finish — write, "The End" to that character's story — and, unfortunately, the only way we saw fit to do that — or that fit best within the framework of CRISIS — was actually killing Barry Allen.

MARV: I wish that THE FLASH, as a book, had been stronger, had sold a lot better, so that some of these things wouldn't have had to be done. But THE FLASH had been in trouble for many, many years. When **Ross Andru** took it over, he boosted the sales for the time he was on the book, but they went back down as soon as he left. All the attempts to make it work failed.

I was a big FLASH fan. That's the book that really got me interested in comics again, even though I'd been reading comics since 1961. **Julie Schwartz's** handling of THE FLASH in the early days, I just loved. That one was a little bit hard for me to write. The death of Supergirl was also hard, because of all the ramifications, but since I didn't like the character — after the first three years of her existence, anyway — it wasn't a personal problem to write it. Flash was a little bit harder, personally, even though I think the Supergirl story's stronger than the Flash story, structurally.

PAT: *Let's get to something specific. I think Bob knows what I'm going to ask, because I raised it with him on the phone. It may be niggling and nit-picking, but — you went through the first six issues of CRISIS working very hard to establish the idea that it was going to be the heroes and the villains working together to save their worlds.*

MARV: Right.

PAT: *Then, in issue #7, along comes the first major mission to destroy the Anti-Monitor's satellite, and all we have is the heroes. What happened to all those villains?*

MARV: In issue #9, we have a story called "The Villain War," which continues through issue #10, in which the villains have gotten together to set up a specific power

Marv Wolfman

Photo: Deborah Upton

parallel worlds now while we clean ours out."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

The heroes of two universes venture into the unknown!

play. They decide now that they've all met each other, they're going to take over. We specifically want the heroes and villains to work together and we're leading to that. The whole culmination of the Crisis, which is what the Monitor was concerned with — not the temporary culmination evidenced in issue #7 or #8 — requires both the heroes and villains. The Monitor knew that.

The villains went their own way by character. They had to do something, because it would have been out of character not to. But when it finally comes down to it, yes, they indeed all work together, for the greater good.

BOB: As a result of pulling so many heroes against so many villains, spread out on three different worlds, it's not going to be a superhero slugfest. Some people are going to be very badly hurt, others are going to die, others will, I suspect, throw up their hands in frustration, saying, "This is too much for me," and leave.

MARV: We never left that concept of the heroes and villains working together, we just took it naturally. The villains were not brought on that mission in issue #7 because it was not set up by the Monitor. That was a last-ditch effort mission, set up by the heroes. It's only when they come down to the resolution, where they realized that there's no way around it, that they have to use the villains.

We're trying to keep in character. Issues #8 and #9 look as if they have nothing to do with the Crisis, but they're all setting up how the heroes and villains will work together.

BOB: Issue #10 opens the third and final act. The cover of #10 has Spectre and Anti-Monitor facing off.

MARV: And #9, there *(pointing to cover sketch on the wall)*, is "The Villain War."

BOB: Over sixty villains on that cover.

PAT: *Poor George Perez...*

MARV: Poor George. It's his decision to do it that way — no one else's.

I designed a cover for George that was supposed to have three heads on it — big heads — and something in the middle, I forget what it was. I left George's house, and his wife, Carol, said to me, "Are you making it hard for him?"

"No, this is the easiest one in the world! Three big heads and the blowing up of the Earths." Then I saw the cover — 96 heads in detail!

The man is insane and he's great! I think his insanity makes him great — he loves drawing lots of figures.

BOB: When the pages were starting to come in on "The Villain War," it was such fun to see how we were pairing up heroes against villains. There was one panel in issue #9 that I loved in particular: It has Green Arrow and Black Canary from Earth-1,

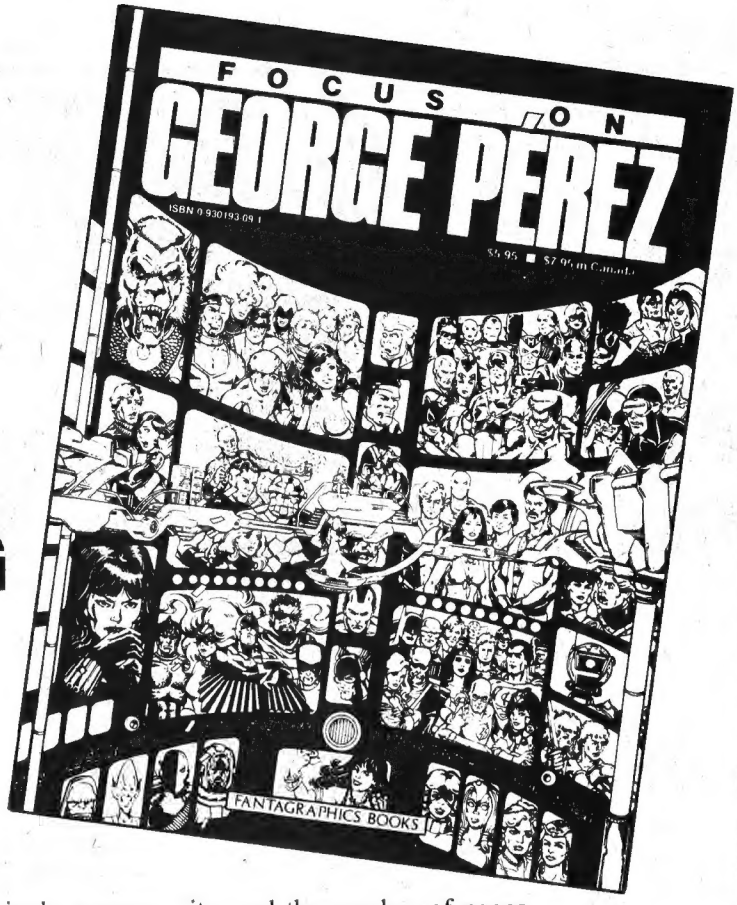
The official DC Bob Greenberger bubblegum card.

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Bob Greenberger
Born: 24 July 1958, Brooklyn, NY
Education: SUNY, Binghamton, 1980; BA History, Journalism
Credits: Associate editor STARLOG; editor COMICS SCENE; managing editor FANGORIA, WRESTLING SCENE, RINGSIDE, WRESTLING ALL-STARS, FIGHT GAME; associate editor NEW TEEN TITANS, TALES OF THE TEEN TITANS, VIGILANTE, CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS; editor STAR TREK, V, DC CHALLENGE
Favorite Actresses Interviewed: Karen Allen *(she's cute)*; Carrie Fisher *(she kissed me)*
Pet Peeve: People who ask me if I like SECRET WARS, which I've never read.

THE BOOK COMICS FANS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR

A truly complete retrospective of the work of the man who turned the comics world on its ear!



Focus On George Perez exhaustively encompasses in one volume George Perez's entire career, from his days as a fan artist to the pinnacle of success he enjoys today.

*

A feature-length, timely interview with Perez, in which he talks about all the phases of his career. Conducted by Heidi MacDonald.

*

A complete checklist of Perez's comics work, including work from pre-professional years. Incalculable aid in completing your Perez collections! Index listings include: comic title and issue number, year, story title, complete creator credits, and the number of pages.

*

Articles and analyses of the series Perez has worked on, such as *The Avengers, Fantastic Four, Titans, Sons of the Tiger, Man-Wolf,* and more.

*

An analysis of Perez's storytelling techniques by critic R.C. Harvey.

*

And of course, Perez's own "visual resume" of his own career, replete with the fine detail that is his trademark!

This book, produced in the same quality format as the incredibly popular ***Focus on John Byrne****, is a heavily illustrated tribute to the talent of a man who has captured the imagination and enthusiasm of fandom. This squarebound, 120-page book will look great on your bookshelf and cost you a mere $5.95 ($7.95 in Canada), less than most graphic novels.*

Don't risk missing this collector's and fan's dream book: send in this coupon (or a photocopy thereof) and guarantee that you get your copy of this limited edition publication covering the phenomenal career of GEORGE PEREZ!

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

☐ Send me *Focus On George Perez.* I have enclosed $5.95 ($7.95 outside U.S.) in U.S. funds, plus $1.00 for postage and handling, per copy.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to: Fantagraphics Books, 4359 Cornell Road, Agoura, CA 91301

"Perez's insanity makes him great."

PHOTO: JOHN CLAYTON

George Peréz

fighting Punch and Julie, two old Charlton villains — one couple against another. It just plays off so well. That's George — his choreography is just amazing.

MARV: He just totally bamboozles me. I don't know where and how he comes up with those ideas — but he's just great!

PAT: *I noticed going through the WHO'S WHO, I saw things listed that I thought were outside the established DC universe.*

MARV: Such as...

PAT: *CAMELOT 3000.*

MARV: WHO'S WHO has nothing to do with the DC universe, it's just all DC published characters. CRISIS is pure universe.

PAT: *I think a lot of people were not aware of that...*

BOB: I thought we had specified it in our introduction to issues #1 and #2 of WHO'S WHO. And the mail has not borne that out at all. The only world and characters people have been asking about consistently has been the Camelot 3000 crew, or Arak, or Atari Force, in CRISIS, hopefully because of WHO'S WHO. They realize that's outside DC continuity. For Captain Carrot and his Zoo Crew, we decided to somewhat rewrite history and put them in, rather than a parallel universe, a dimension approximately two doors to the left of Gemworld.

PAT: *I would have figured that ARAK was part of DC continuity...*

MARV: **Roy Thomas** requested that it not be, so we didn't put him in. If he had claimed it was, we would have.

BOB: Of course, there's now Arak the Wind-Walker in Helix, in INFINITY INC., so Roy got it both ways. *(Laughter.)*

PAT: *When another writer or editor comes to you and asks, "Hey, I'd like to tie something that's happening in my books to CRISIS" — beyond noticing that the skies are red — how much do you request to see what he's doing before he gets too far into it?*

MARV: First, I immediately start to pull out my great, voluminous, amount of hair. *(Laughter.)*

BARBARA RANDALL: On Earth-2!

MARV: I had a full head of hair before this book began.

BARBARA: Yeah, and I was six feet tall!

MARV: She's been proving a problem, so we've been pounding her into the ground.

We go over the stuff with them for CRISIS, I answer any questions. Anything that enters into the CRISIS book, we sit on very carefully. I'm on the phone four, five, six, seven times — as many times as it takes — to work with any individual writer. I think I've spoken to **Steve Englehart** more times in the past two months than in the twelve years I've known him.

When it happens in their books, either Bob or I are available, but it's really up to the individual person how much he wants to show it to us.

We have asked — and most of the editors have been good about this — that the CRISIS crossovers be in all the comics. We would like the red skies and such to be indicated everywhere. If it's a minor crossover — one or two pages, which is very nice for the book — we ask them, "Do not blurb it as a CRISIS crossover." If it's a major crossover, if it's the root of your plot, "Blurb it." Most of the editors have done this, not all. Most of the blurbed crossovers have been full crossovers. I think we've had only one or two cases, of all the different crossovers, that the title was put on incorrectly. Most of the books, by the way, have crossovers that are not indicated, so people reading these titles get extras.

BOB: I just got a letter this morning, asking why we didn't cover-blurb TALES OF THE TEEN TITANS #58 as a CRISIS crossover, because that's where Psimon gets yanked aboard the Monitor's satellite.

MARV: It wasn't an important part of the story — it was half a page.

PAT: *Why then was THE LOSERS SPECIAL billed as a CRISIS crossover? It had nothing to do with the Crisis, beyond the fact that the Losers die in the first issue of CRISIS.*

BOB: Here is the way I see it: Dick wanted to do a number of specials that played off events in CRISIS, taking those events and expanding on them. The first one he chose to do was THE LOSERS. I think **Murray Boltinoff**, the editor, took as his mandate to work off the Losers' role in CRISIS, but make the book work for the war fans without too much intrusion from the superhero and anti-matter elements. As a war story, it holds up pretty well. In fact, **Bob Kanigher** did some pretty nice stuff in the first three-quarters of the book.

MARV: I have to agree. As a CRISIS crossover, I don't think it worked — as the last Losers story, I do think it works. However, to make it work, in issue #10, we cut back to the death of the Losers and make it connect to THE LOSERS SPECIAL. That way, at least people who bought it thinking it was a total CRISIS crossover won't be too disappointed.

BOB: We're nothing if not tidy.

MARV: That was only done for the readers who complained, and we agreed with their complaints. But it was a good last issue of THE LOSERS.

Next a new creative team launches a new story line as we investigate the mystery of **WHO IS CAPTAIN PARAGON.** Bill Black will once again write the destiny of his own creations. He will be joined by a dynamic new penciler, Erik Larsen, and a slick new inker, Emil Novak. Bi-monthly from **AC COMICS.**

"The DC Universe made no sense."

PAT: *As the Crisis begins, the red sky phenomenon, ecetera, is throughout history on each of the Earths. Correct? Then, will the regular readers of the war books see a reference to those red skies? I wouldn't expect anything more than that, but will they at least see that?*

MARV: I think it will be in all books but the war books. One of the things we have to worry about is — are we going to hurt the integrity of something that doesn't totally fit into the superhero universe? We can fit it in the superhero books, because it doesn't hurt us. But is it right for Sgt. Rock to be facing intergalactic menaces? The way to get around that is to simply state that no specific story happened in July during the two weeks that the Crisis is in operation, during the years of 1941-45. I would not request that the war books reflect the Crisis — I request only that the superhero books do.

BOB: Of course, had **Joe Kubert** and **Murry Boltinoff** wanted to tie in, nobody would have stopped them.

MARV: We would have helped them anyway we could. As it is, we featured Rock, we featured the Haunted Tank as much as possible, we have a thing with Balloon Buster. We're trying to alert readers who may only buy CRISIS that we have war books, and they may be interested in these characters. But it would really be wrong to alienate the fans of the war books.

BOB: For the same reason, JONAH HEX did not feature a cameo by the Monitor, but there are captions that astute readers would have picked up on.

MARV: **Mike Fleisher** did do that. There are set-ups in there.

BOB: Everyone tried to make each book work on its own, and within the greater whole.

MARV: It sounds strange to say I think only the superhero books will be compromised in that way. In the overview, there isn't much difference between an Earth-shattering plot that comes out of the Crisis, and an Earth-shattering plot that happens within a character's own book. But there is certainly a problem with Earth-shattering plots in SGT. ROCK.

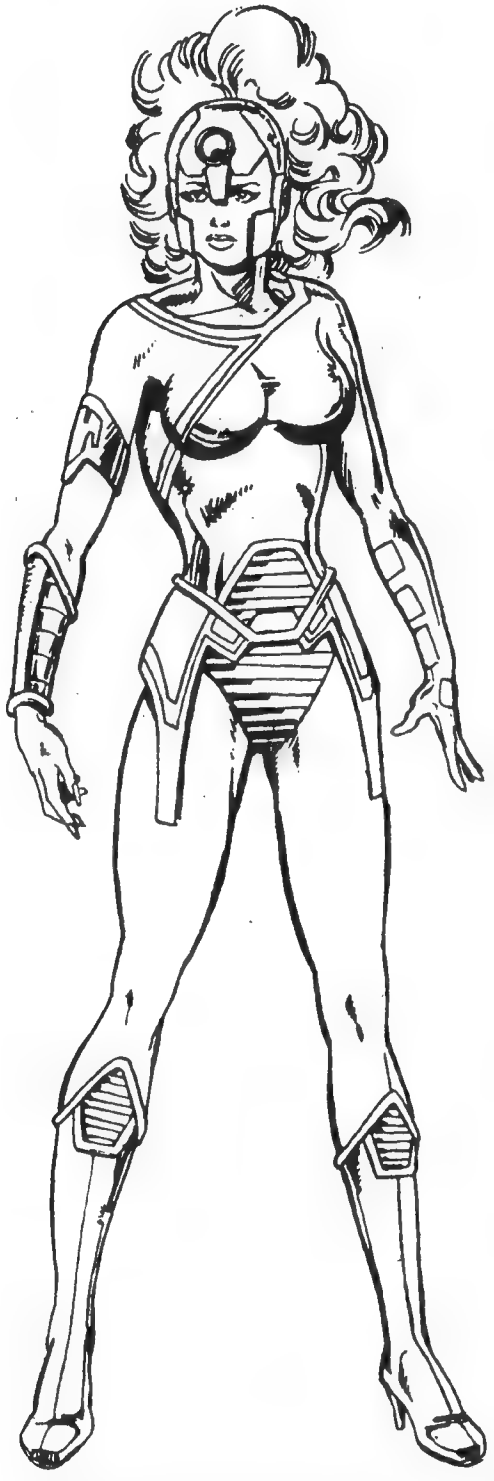
PAT: *Given all this — and that it won't mean much when CRISIS is over — in your opinion, on what Earth did Rock fight World War II?*

MARV: I purposely indicated that it took place on Earth-2. You'll notice that he knew about the "mystery man" of the All-Star Squadron.

BOB: Yeah, but there was a WORLD'S FINEST story where Wonder Woman and Sgt. Rock team up...

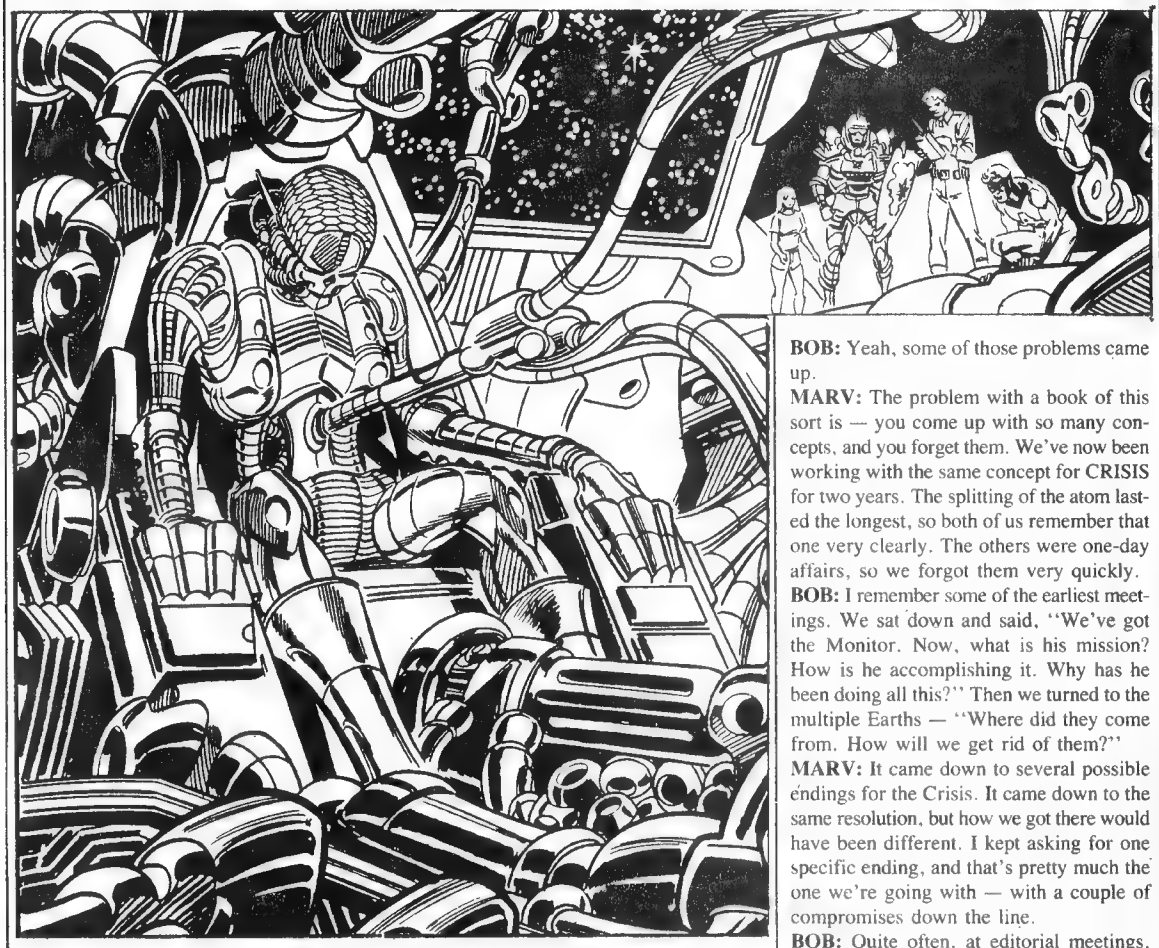
PAT: *There's also been stories where the*

Harbinger — formerly Lyla, the Monitor's assistant.



© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

"CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS isn't a



© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

Brainiac — dead?

Earth-1 Batman teamed up with Sgt. Rock. I wanted to find out how much corrective continuity is happening here?

MARV: It really won't make any difference by the time we're done, because of the way we're structuring the ending. It's the simplest, most direct, and easiest to follow end.

One of the things I'm most pleased with is how we connected the origin of the Crisis, of the anti-matter universe, of the Anti-Monitor, to current DC mythology, and made it work. I think it worked very well. It was very hard going, as Bob knows. We sat there month after month trying to make it work — trying to come up with convoluted explanations for this. Finally, at a lunch, right downstairs at Pastrami 'n' Things, Bob and I were talking — and suddenly it all clicked into place.

BOB: Marv had all the pieces, but he wasn't sure how they fit. Sitting over lunch we talked it through, and within twenty minutes it clicked into place.

MARV: Absolutely perfectly.

BOB: And that's exactly what you read in issue #7.

PAT: *You mentioned earlier that you sat around in the conference room, coming up with wonderful ideas on how the multiverse was created, and within a short time somebody shot holes in all of them. This is something I think fans would love — what were some of the rejected concepts?*

MARV: One of them was the first atom bomb — or rather the first splitting of the atom.

BOB: The first splitting of the atom took place in 1938. What other significant event occurred in 1938? ACTION #1, the first appearance of Superman! We thought, "Boy, what a great connection that is!" The splitting of the atom split the multiverse. But then **Julie Schwartz** and **Nelson Bridwell** pointed out that it didn't work as you went through the timeline.

PAT: *For example, for Superman to exist as an adult in 1938, he has to have arrived on Earth in something like 1917.*

BOB: Yeah, some of those problems came up.

MARV: The problem with a book of this sort is — you come up with so many concepts, and you forget them. We've now been working with the same concept for CRISIS for two years. The splitting of the atom lasted the longest, so both of us remember that one very clearly. The others were one-day affairs, so we forgot them very quickly.

BOB: I remember some of the earliest meetings. We sat down and said, "We've got the Monitor. Now, what is his mission? How is he accomplishing it. Why has he been doing all this?" Then we turned to the multiple Earths — "Where did they come from. How will we get rid of them?"

MARV: It came down to several possible endings for the Crisis. It came down to the same resolution, but how we got there would have been different. I kept asking for one specific ending, and that's pretty much the one we're going with — with a couple of compromises down the line.

BOB: Quite often, at editorial meetings, Marv would come out with all this gobbledygook about CRISIS, and all the editors would sit there slack-jawed, and go, "But wait a second —" and the discussion would start from there. A lot of the formulation happened like that early on.

We once had an all-morning meeting, at a hotel down the block. **Roy Thomas** was in town, and we had **Paul Levitz, Bruce Bristow,** and **Jenette Kahn** there, to talk out the crossovers. We talked about the red skies, and the timing, and how it would work with various books on sale when. Marv had this elaborate outline that he gave to everyone. We started talking about spin-off specials, and whether or not certain books could be double-sized. Paul and Bruce were there, at the meeting, to give us an instantaneous yes or no. So, when Julie wanted to do a double-sized DC COMICS PRESENTS, with Superman and the Superboy of Earth-Prime, they were able to sit there and say, "Yes." Or when we wanted to do another special, they could say, "No, there's too much product out at that time." We were able to have the kind of feedback

history because we're changing history."

we needed, so we wouldn't lose our momentum. They sat on the couch, separate from the editors at the table, occasionally tossing in questions for clarification — but, basically, the editors brain-stormed and Paul and Bruce were there to say yes or no with regard to the business end of it. By the close of that day, we had hammered out a tenative schedule for the crossovers.

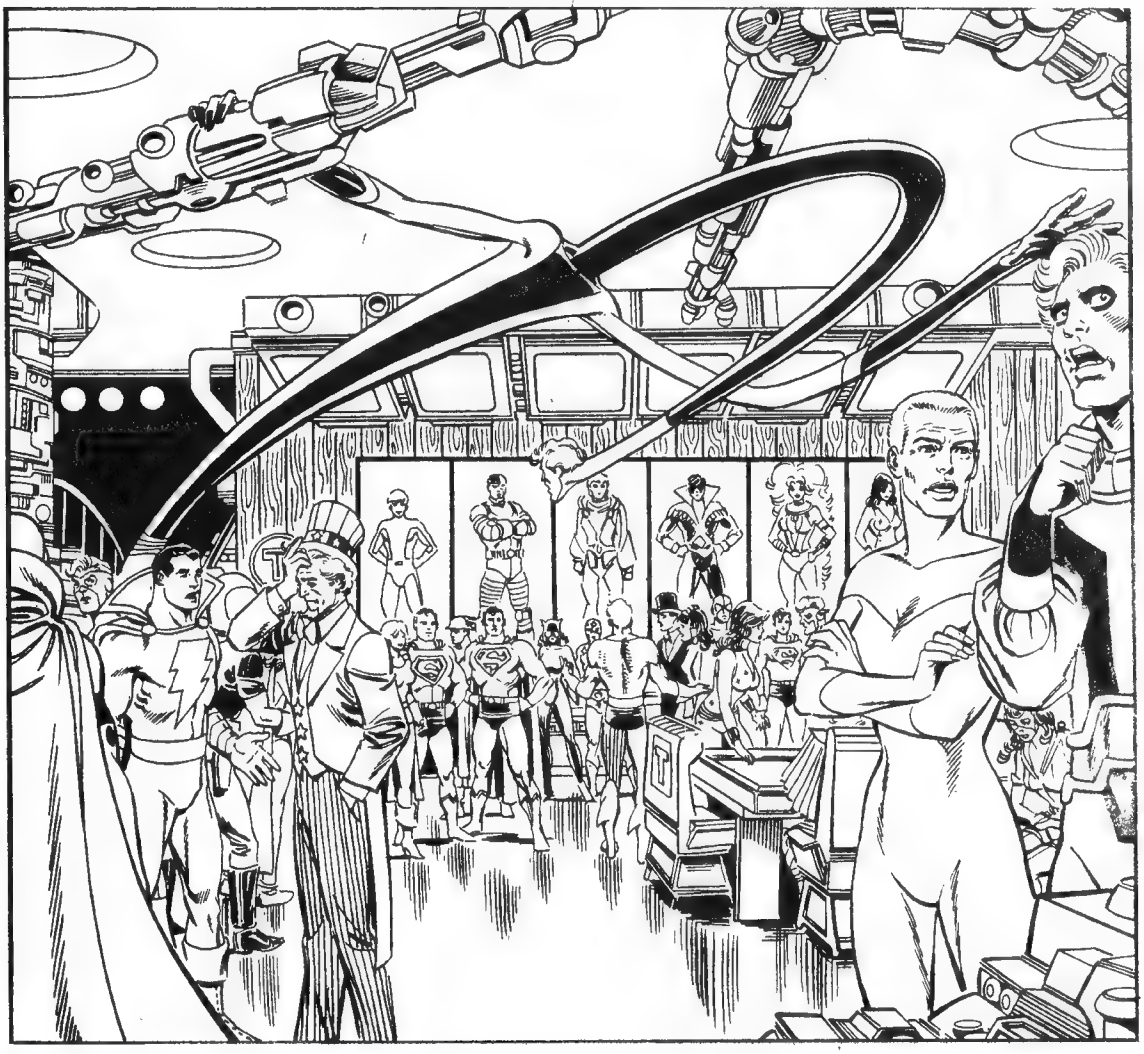
PAT: *Other then Roy's accepted request to leave Arak out of things, and Paul's rejected request to have Supergirl hang around in the Legion's future, what other things did writers or editors come and ask regarding their characters and CRISIS?*

MARV: The whole set-up for the Red Tornado came from **Dan Mishkin**, who was doing the Tornado's change-over in the JUSTICE LEAGUE ANNUAL; the set-up for the new Wildcat; the Blue Devil crossover with the Omega Men. There's a sequence in issue #8 which is the set-up for six different crossovers. The problem was that writers would come to me and say, "Here's what we want to do," and then I'd have to make it work for CRISIS. The thing I kept at the very top of my mind, always, was I had to make CRISIS work, as well as trying to help them. All the crossovers have to work within the context of CRISIS.

So issue #8 has the sequence with the Red Tornado, the destruction of the JLA satellite, Blue Devil going to the Vegan star system, T.O. Morrow going to Brainiac's ship, Firehawk's costume change, and one or two other things I can't remember now, all within one section — all working completely logically for CRISIS. If you never buy the other books, you won't know that this was a set-up. That's what I'm very proud of. Most of the set-ups we've done for other writers make sense within our context. That's the struggle of a book like this — it's very easy to say, "Continued in..." which we do, but to make it work so a reader who doesn't buy all the other titles is still satisfied, that's hard. I'm very, very pleased.

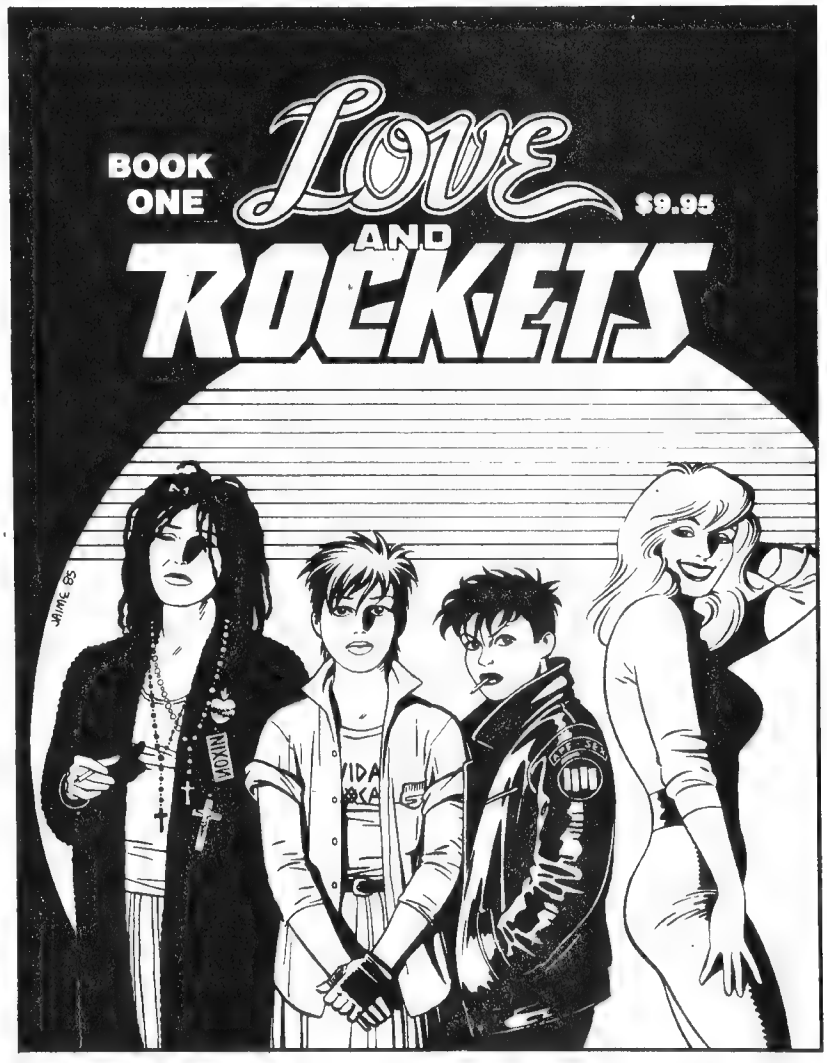
I've been saying that CRISIS is a giant, 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle, with 1000 characters running around, and my job is to take those pieces, along with **George Perez**, and make the complete picture with no seams. If George and I are successful, you won't know there was ever a puzzle. I think we have succeeded about ninety percent of the time. I always like working with George — there's a synergy between us that comes out

An illustrious assemblage at the Teen Titans' tower.



© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

With Our Sincere Apologies



We know the trouble you've been having, and we can't help but feel responsible. You've been trying to get the first 10 issues of ***Love and Rockets*** and you've been getting nowhere. You tried every comics store in town and they're sold out. The distributors are sold out. We're sold out. You might give the Hernandez Brothers a call, but we already tried that and they wouldn't sell us any of their copies. Ingrates.

What can we say? All of a sudden, there just weren't enough to go around. In our own defense, how could we have known? Jaime, Gilbert, and Mario Hernandez brought ***L&R*** to us out of nowhere in 1982, and it turned into the phenomenon of independent comics publishing. Los Bros Hernandez have been hailed by readers, critics, and their peers in the industry as the finest storytellers in comics. As a result, demand has now somewhat exceeded supply.

Tell ya what we're gonna do:

Love and Rockets Book One, reprinting ***Love and Rockets*** numbers 1 and 2 in their entirety, with the front and back covers, plus color pages, plus two new stories, is now available, for as long as it lasts. We think we've printed enough of the softcover edition. We had to limit the hardcover edition, though. If you want it, you'll have to speak now, or forever haunt the *Buyer's Guide* classifieds.

This is, of course, the first in a series. Now you can see what the shouting's about and follow all the stories and the development of the characters from their beginnings. We hope this at least partially makes up in some way for your previous frustration, anguish, and general inconvenience.

Friends?

Love and Rockets Book One, 8½" x 11", squarebound, hardcover and softcover, 156 pp. Cover colored by Paul Rivoche.

Please send me **Love and Rockets Book One**, softcover, $12.00, postage paid ($14.00 outside U.S.)

Please send me **Love and Rockets Book One**, hardcover, $33.00, postage paid ($36.00 outside U.S.)

I am over 18 years of age.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Mail & Make Checks Payable To:

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

4359 Cornell Road
Agoura, CA 91301

"After we finish CRISIS, we're beginning the definitive history of the DC Universe."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

that makes the finished product much better than when we start. As Bob knows, since he was connected with the strong plotting of the early issues, although George and I have since begun plotting on our own. We come back with these incredible stories of what we're doing that were not set up. They're in our initial plots — but where we go with them is all new.

I also like the fact that your tape recorder has an input labeled "monitor." *(Laughter.)*

BOB: As far as other crossovers are concerned, the ones I'm happiest with are what **Englehart** is doing with GREEN LANTERN. He is numbering, starting around #194 and coinciding with CRISIS #8, "5," "4," "3," "2," "1" — a countdown. We reach issue #12 of CRISIS, and he hits whatever it is in the GL run, and they are closely linked, as you'll see in a one-page sequence in CRISIS #8 and the first two pages of #9 — they are very key scenes to what's going on in GREEN LANTERN. Marv and Steve worked it out very carefully, and then Steve and I talked it over some more.

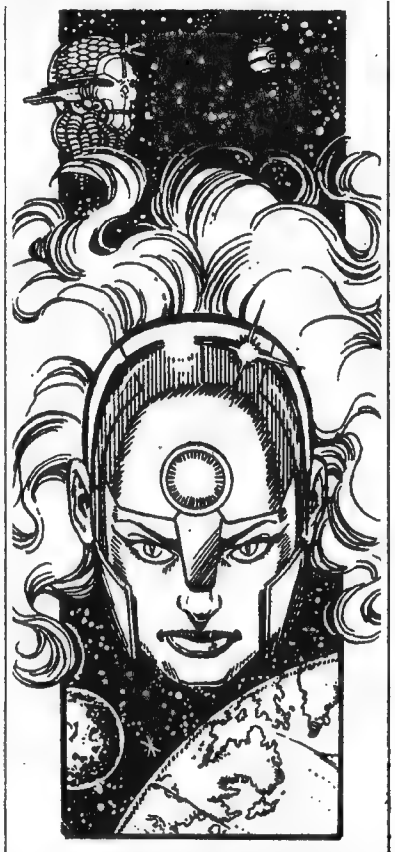
PAT: *Since we're talking about GREEN LANTERN, and you people have pointed out that you have to keep in mind that not everybody who reads CRISIS reads other books in the line —*

MARV: That's very safe to say.

PAT: *— DC's two big characters that everybody recognizes are Superman and Batman. Was there ever a feeling from you, or someone else, that the events of the Crisis should be tightly connected to, say, Superman's background? What I mean is, you've taken a fairly obscure story in GREEN LANTERN and made it the beginning of everything in the DC universe.*

MARV: That was done purposely. Chronologically, the GL story is the earliest — it takes place ten billion years ago. As far as cosmic effect, it did the most — creating the Guardians and the Green Lantern Corps, our central cosmic characters. Superman's origin only affects Superman, in many ways. It's just one planet. No one ever asked us to use Krypton, or anything else as the center. We were left alone.

I was adamant about not playing up the major characters in the early issues. I purposely led us away from that. If you look at the early issues, I did not use any of the big-selling characters — the Titans don't appear until #3 or #4, the Outsiders don't appear until then, the Legion doesn't appear until about that time to any great extent. I wanted it to be obvious that the story was more important than any individual character — more important than Superman, more important than the Titans which would have brought in the most fans. I could have made the Titans, the Outsiders, and the Legion a central part of the story and brought in more readers, but I thought that would have been cheating. I want the story to be important. So we structured it around our oldest happening in the DC universe, not the one most people may be familiar with. It's also the reason we went into such detail in #7 to explain what happened in that GREEN LANTERN story. We have as many panels in our flashback to that event as there were in the telling of the event in the original story. You never have to have read that GREEN LANTERN story to understand CRISIS. Even if you don't read GL, chances are you know about the Guardians, because of the rest of DC mythology. I felt it was very important to do it correctly. The Guardians have the most cosmic effect on the rest of the universe and the anti-matter universe concept was first put forward in GREEN LANTERN. Since we were using an anti-matter villain, that made sense, too.



A DC news release states that Harbinger's role "will become pivotal before the series ends."

PAT: *What's the* raison d'etre *of doing a project as massive as CRISIS? You've said it's being done to simplify the DC universe —*

MARV: Streamline it. That's part of it.

BOB: See, Marv and George wanted summer homes.

MARV: Let me state, right off the top, when I first proposed the concept and presented it to **Len Wein**, and we presented it to Jenette — that was before royalties. We had no anticipation of making any money. In fact, Len and I thought we'd be splitting our page rate, since we were writing it together. We thought it would be a money-loser for us — it still is, by the way.

The reason for doing it? We thought the DC universe was cluttered, it made no sense. There were so many stories that set up so much, it was too much for anybody to understand. If you tried to bring somebody into the DC universe last year and tried to explain the multiple Earths, the multiple Supermen, the multiple everything, it would drive them crazy. They'd go running elsewhere. The idea was to eliminate all of that — streamline the universe, get rid of the deadwood, get rid of the multiple universes.

I loved those stories when I was a kid, but I read them one at a time. I followed the genesis of all this complicated garbage. Somebody coming in today just sees the end result, and they don't realize it came from really good stories. My attitude is — we've done it, now let's acknowledge that what worked ten to fifteen years ago has been done to death at this point. And let's do it better.

So CRISIS was really designed for that reason alone — to simplify and streamline the universe.

The original idea came to me, as I've stated, when a reader asked, in a letter, whether we would ever straighten out some of the kinks in DC continuity. I was so intrigued by the concept — as were Bob, Len, and others — that I sought permission from the powers-that-be to pursue the project.

Our first step was to hire **Peter Sanderson** to research — and it took four or five months before the money people would agree to the huge expense of a research assistant. Then it took Peter four times longer than anyone expected to do the job — which required reading every single comic DC had ever published in the superhero or adventurer field and making notes on everything.

"The JLA/JSA team-up tradition, quite

Above and opposite: The history of the DC Universe unfolds, and The Viking Prince, Phantom Ace, and Amthor the Cave-boy all play their parts.

When **Roy Thomas** arrived, we began to fear that the idea of getting rid of the multiple Earths would never get past Roy, who was contractually editor of the Earth-2 characters. So when the research was completed, we put the project on hold, and started work on WHO'S WHO. Then Roy said he liked the idea of collapsing the universes.

That's when I realized, about two years ago, that the first DC book was published in 1935, after some quick research in the OVERSTREET PRICE GUIDE — or the Overpriced Street Guide. That made 1985 our 50th anniversary. So then I said let's put the project, including WHO'S WHO, on hold until then.

Coincidently, other people had suggested this concept in the past. **Gerry Conway** had suggested what he called "the Big Bang Theory," in which everything would explode and whatever survived would be on one Earth. I knew about that and mentioned Gerry in the first CRISIS letter column because of it. He never really worked out the mechanics of how it would happen. Other writers also suggested it, but only as speculation — it was just one of those things you talked about every so often.

BOB: I always point out to people, when they question why we're killing, maiming and destroying, that we're also creating. There's been Lady Quark, Harbinger, Pariah. **Roy Thomas** let us introduce the new Wildcat for him.

MARV: The new Doctor Light...

BOB: We are introducing new characters, new powers, trying to redefine certain relationships, and recreate, and streamline, coalesce.

PAT: *And, of course, to many readers, you've introduced an entire Earth full of new characters — which those of us who have been reading comics for some twenty years recognize as having been published by another company.*

BOB: Oh, Charlton, sure.

MARV: Over the years, DC has bought up an awful lot of characters. BLACKHAWK wasn't a DC book until the mid-50s.

BOB: Neither was G.I. COMBAT.

MARV: Neither was PLASTIC MAN. There's nothing strange about DC doing that.

PAT: *What I was getting at is the reader who has been reading DC Comics since, say, 1980, looks upon those Charlton characters as brand new. "Who are these? Oh, whole new Earth, hun? Whole bunch of new characters!"*

MARV: I felt very good over the fact that we got a lot of letters wondering where Lady Quark and her planet existed in DC mythology, until we finally said they were created new for CRISIS. But they sounded like they belonged.

We are creating, Bob is right. We're not destroying — as far as I'm concerned, we're creating a new DC universe. I refuse to talk about the deaths, and I've never talked about who's dying, because I don't feel that's the important part of CRISIS. I don't want to be morbid and dwell on the characters who are dying — I'd much rather talk about where DC's going to be next year.

BOB: If you think about it, if we have one world at the end of the Crisis, that means you're going to have the heroes and villains of five worlds, on one world. That is going to have interesting ramifications that a lot of the writers are interested in picking up on. You're going to have combinations that you've never seen before, by virtue of the fact that you don't have to worry about crossing dimensions.

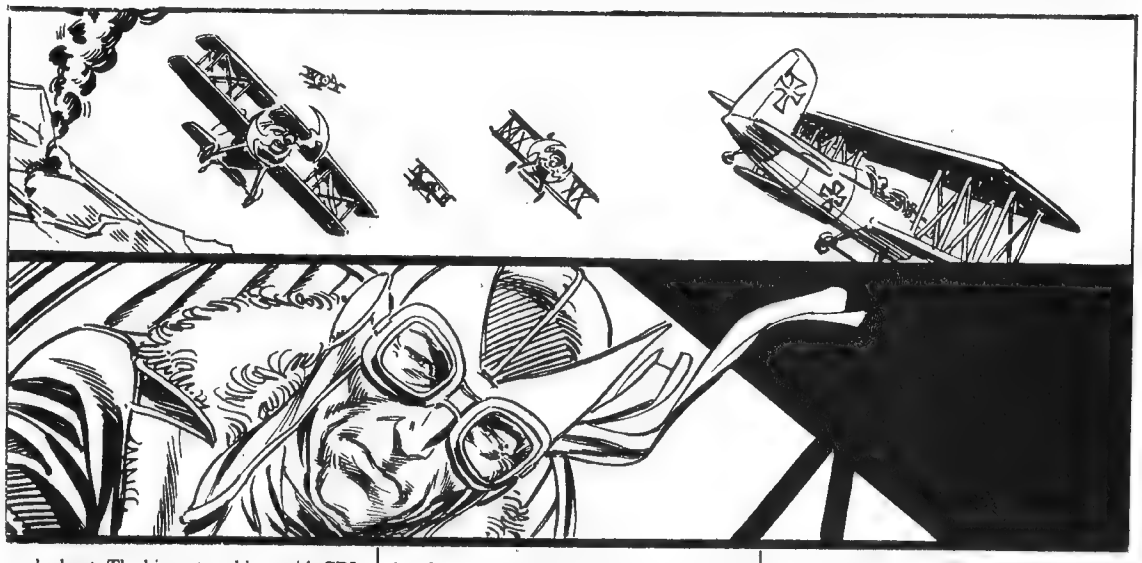
PAT: *This is a question of future ramifications, I guess. Will the people of the unified Earth remember that it was ever any different?*

MARV: I can't answer that one, because the answer will appear in CRISIS after this interview sees print. Needless to say, it was

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

frankly, outlasted decent stories."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.



worked out. The biggest problem with CRISIS was figuring out how to end it correctly, so every possible question was answered. We had to compromise a little, but I'm ninety-five percent happy about the ending — and that's pretty good. When you're dealing with twenty writers and editors, if there were no compromises at all, I'd be shocked. The fact that we all agreed this was the way to go indicates that it does answer all the questions. You'll have to wait.

BOB: For those who wonder what we're going to do with a world of two Hawkmen, two Green Lanterns, two Atoms, and so forth, we have had many discussions with all the creators involved with the duplicates — primarily **Roy Thomas** — and we've worked it all out to everybody's satisfaction. Nobody's going to run around crying sour grapes later on, I don't think.

MARV: Though CRISIS #12 ends the story, some of the ramifications continue on into the reconstructed DC universe, and some of the biggest changes occur afterward. But the CRISIS story is complete unto itself.

PAT: *We've talked about how the complexity of the DC universe can drive new readers away screaming — Earth-1, Earth-2, Earth-whatever. Did this difficulty in understanding the fictional world lead, in part, to Marvel's current dominance in the marketplace?*

BOB: I think the cohesiveness of the single Marvel universe — that **Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby** very quickly made accessible to everybody, with characters bopping in and out of each other's books, because they were all in Manhattan at that time — did help. I don't think it was an overwhelming factor. I think it was a much more subtle factor. At the same time Marvel was doing that for the first time, DC did a very spare number of crossovers, fewer than six a year I would suspect. In the '70s, when Marvel really took over, we had weighted ourselves down with Earth-X, Earth-S, and capped it off with Earth-C. We weighted ourselves down at a time when we should have been streamlining.

I find it curious that Marvel is busily creating parallel worlds now while we clean ours out.

PAT: *This occurred to me because I just picked up — the current issues of JUSTICE LEAGUE and INFINITY INC. feature what's being billed as "the last JLA/JSA team-up"...*

MARV: The last interdimensional team-up, certainly.

PAT: *That's what I was trying to straighten out. There seems no reason to me why, in twelve months, whatever and whoever is left of the JSA and JLA couldn't meet, as they have for the past twenty-some-odd years, but without the usual interdimensional machinations.*

BOB: But were they to do that a year from now, it won't be as unique and as special, so the concensus among Roy, and **Andy Helfer**, and **Alan Gold** — the new and retiring editors of JLA — was that it was time to end the tradition.

MARV: The tradition, quite frankly, outlasted decent stories. I always come down to that. I don't think there's been a good JLA/JSA team-up in years, so I don't mind seeing the end of those as an annual tradition. I think it will be much better, and behoove all creators involved, to do a JLA/JSA crossover when and if they come up with a story, not because it's now the July issue. The single Earth will allow that, too. You can have JSA characters popping up in the JLA all the time — we don't have to have the full group, and we don't have to set it in those issues.

BOB: And there's going to be a lot more of that. A lot of our characters who have met for the first time in CRISIS will be hav-

DRAGON LADY PRESS PRESENTS

OUR COMPANION MAG COMING IN JULY

3 Stories ***Bi-monthly***

ORIGINAL COVER BY ***LEONARD STARR***

12 ISSUE
SUBSCRIPTIONS
$ 31.00 U.S. $38.00 CAN.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATON
INQUIRE THROUGH YOUR
DISTRIBUTOR OR
WRITE TO:
DRAGON LADY PRESS
200 QUEEN ST. WEST
TORONTO, ONTARIO
CANADA, M5V 1Z2

ISSUE 2 FEATURES DICK TRACY

"It's not going to be a superhero slugfest."

ing team-ups. Upcoming are a Blue Devil/Firestorm crossover, an Omega Men/Green Lantern crossover.

MARV: Roy and I are talking about an Infinity/Titans crossover, which we could not have done, and I would not have done, with the characters on separate Earths. I don't want to waste my time explaining all that nonsense. I like the Infinity characters, so we'll wait 'til CRISIS is over, when there's one Earth.

BOB: Just by virtue of the fact that Infinity, Blue Devil, Green Lantern, and the Outsiders located near each other in Los Angeles, they're going to trip over each other at some point or another.

PAT: *In a recent column in COMICS BUYERS GUIDE, Don Thompson asked why, in this restructuring, DC doesn't finally get rid of all the fictitious cities?*

MARV: On a personal level, I agree. I was the one who took Green Lantern out of Coast City and put him into Los Angeles. However, I would be the last person who would take Superman out of Metropolis or Batman out of Gotham. As far as I'm concerned, those two cities can stay and the rest can go away. Those two cities are unique in terms of those characters — the cities have become a part of the mythology. Tell me what the name of Green Arrow's city is? It's Star City. But what's unique about Star City? What's unique about Ivy Town? It may as well be Boston.

PAT: *I always thought it was New Haven.*

MARV: It could be either one. The point is that neither is special. Central City is not special. None of the cities are special, outside of Metropolis and Gotham. Maybe it's because they've been around for nearly fifty years, or maybe it's because no real city would function as well. Metropolis has to be better than any other city. New York is not Metroplis — Metropolis is cleaner, more fantasy-oriented. Gotham is a lot darker than Chicago, which I always figured was the real Earth equivalent, because of the crime of the '30s and '40s. But it's a darker city, a more malevolent one. They use the cities, no other books do. If all the other writers would like to get rid of the fictional cities and leave Superman and Batman alone, I think that would be acceptable.

BOB: With regard to what to do with the Charlton characters — **Steve Englehart** asked me if we could take the Blue Beetle and The Question out of Hub City, and put them in real cities. It's something we have to take up back here, and if we're starting fresh, now might be the best time.

MARV: What we're trying to do is make the universe work. I am desperately trying to keep all the characters in character. Fortunately, most of the readers feel we are. George just instinctively draws them all correctly. I don't know how he can make Sivanna and Tawky Tawny work in the same panel with Wonder Woman, the Changeling, and Supergirl, but he did it. He somehow blends the styles magnificently. I have no problem writing Sivanna in an argument with Dr. Cyber, T.O. Morrow, or any of the other villains, even though he is obviously a cartoon. George is altering his style for each character, down to having them pose correctly.

And the readers are responding to the extra effort we take to do that. They don't sound like just a bland version of themselves — the Joker sounds like the Joker, the Bat-

Meanwhile, back on Paradise Island...

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

NUMBER ONE WITH A BULLET

SHIPPING IN OCTOBER... FROM

Renegade Press

"Some characters outlived their usefulness."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

man sounds like the Batman — they act correctly, they move correctly. I think that's very important when you're doing a book of this sort — that you don't "blanderize" each individual character.

BOB: Both CRISIS and WHO'S WHO are inordinately problem-prone. They take longer to produce than any three books on the schedule. But when the finished book arrives in-house, you sit back and go, "Ooh-aah, this was worth it."

MARV: The nice thing about it is that the readers are responding in kind. They can see the effort is being made to produce a good book, a book DC can be proud of, that can show non-DC fans that DC is as good as anyone else.

PAT: *Has the mail included suggestions on what they think you should do?*

MARV: For the first five issues, everyone was guessing who the villain was.

BOB: The leading candidate in the mail was Darkseid.

MARV: Then, it was who's living, who's dying, followed by how we're going to change it. Now, everybody's guessing how we're going to merge the Earths. So far, I don't believe anyone's come up with the correct answer — which amazes me because it's so simple.

PAT: *Has anyone said, specifically, "Hey, I think you ought to do X with character A"?*

MARV: Yes. Up until right now, we have time to do it, too. We haven't plotted issues #11 and #12 yet, in terms of full plots. We have the general structure, but not full details. If suggestions come in, good ones, we could still incorporate them.

BOB: A lot of people wanted to know what was happening to Earth-Prime in all of this.

MARV: I was avoiding mentioning it. I thought the concept was stupid.

BOB: But the mail wouldn't let us avoid it. The mail demanded Ambush Bug, and he makes a cameo in #9.

MARV: Not really a cameo. If anyone goes to buy the book to find Ambush Bug, they may have a tough time. *(Laughter.)* But he is physically present. The image of Ambush Bug is in the book. And that was only added later.

Sometimes things happen to individual characters because we're reminded of somebody. We're not changing any major story elements.

PAT: *But you're reminded, perhaps, when somebody says, that "Gee, we haven't even shown him in a panel, anyplace. He really ought to be there."*

MARV: Exactly.

BOB: Before Marv and George did the final plot for #10, Marv called me to go through the master list that Len and I use on WHO'S WHO to come up with characters that we haven't used yet — characters who can play a major role in "The Villain War" — characters who we have yet to do anything with. I typed up a list of a couple of dozen names, we discussed things we could do with certain of them and discussed them with the editors. Some editors said, "Don't use this character, let me give you another one instead." We're trying to be as fresh as possible.

PAT: *Except for individual shots, I haven't seen a whole lot of the new JLA.*

MARV: Vibe and Steel are important in issue #8 and #9. Dale Gunn is there, too. Gypsy's not in it because frankly there's nothing we could figure out to do with her.

The two Supermen in a dramatic moment.

BOB: Her camouflage powers don't help in a situation like this.

MARV: Find Batman in the series. He's one of our top three characters. Outside of a cameo appearance in the second and third issues, he's not been in the book because he's useless in the Crisis, so we're not featuring him. Just because we don't feature a certain character doesn't mean we have any less regard for him. Batman's one of my favorites, but we just can't use him.

PAT: *Isn't the same true of Nightwing?*

MARV: I'll tell you why I use the Titans so much in CRISIS. One: I write the book. Two: I write the book. That means those were characters I knew I could use, and be-

"People are going to say, 'DC's a year

fore everybody else started coming in and asking for certain things for their characters in CRISIS, I knew I could rely on them. I did not want to use the others without okays. That's why the Outsiders are in the book, but they don't play a major role in the Crisis — **Mike Barr**, their writer/editor, didn't want that. If I have to eventually use some of the better-selling characters, I'll use the Titans, I'll use the Legion, but I wanted a few issues to let the story get going on its own.

If any particular character, like Gypsy, isn't in CRISIS, it's because of an inability to function within a cosmic storyline. Vigilante isn't in it, and I obviously have a love for that character.

PAT: *Originally, the last two issues of CRISIS were to be a sort of primer on the revised history of the DC universe. That idea was dropped to give the space to the story.*

MARV: Once everybody came in and requested set-ups for their characters, and once the story got going, we found that out. You can set up some basic ideas of what happens in each issue, but you can't possibly know how much space it's going to take two years before you start. The issues just kept getting larger, so we pushed into #11 and #12, which is probably better. A lot of people thought we made a mistake trying to end it in issue #10.

PAT: *Will we ever see that definitive history of the DC universe?*

MARV: Yes. That's the project George and I are beginning immediately upon finishing CRISIS — a three-parter set to come out next summer. It is a chronological history of all the characters.

BOB: Starting with the dawn of time...

MARV: ... to our last recorded character. It will be full-process color, fold-outs in every issue, which can be removed from the book. Put together, the foldouts will form a character time-line from the earliest chronologically to the one in the farthest future.

BOB: As a prelude to this project, I sat down to prepare a timeline of characters for Marv, to give him and George a framework within which to tell the story. For example, we had Hex — we had no idea where in the future he is. We asked **Mike Fleisher**, "Where is he?"

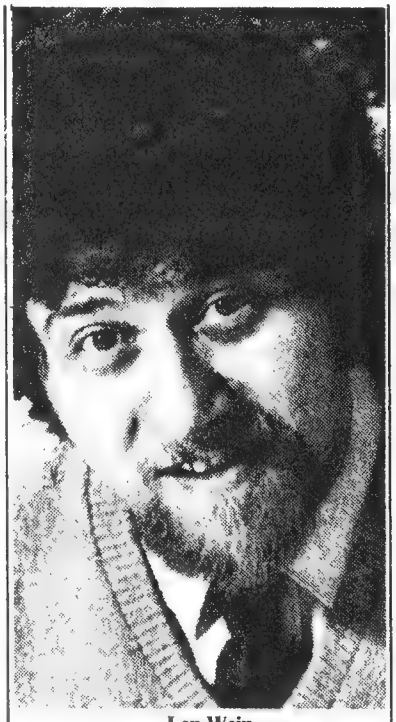
He said, "I think he's here."

To which we answered, "He can't be there, because we have other characters there." Finally, we came up with a time period for Hex that fits in with the new DC universe.

(Len Wein joins in.)

PAT: *How does any of this... Damn! I just lost my train of thought.*

BOB: Len has that effect on people.



Len Wein

PAT: *Will the history be a story or merely a case of "this happened, then this happened?"*

MARV: "Merely" is a pejorative. *(Laughter.)* It's a history, it's not a story. It's a chronological retelling of DC's history in order. I think it's very exciting, because we can finally put all our characters in order for all the readers. CRISIS is not a history, because we're changing history. A lot of readers will not be sure where everything fits now. The History will let them know.

PAT: *Marvel recently announced they were going to do a history of their universe. We know that DC had this project in the works as long as two years ago, as part of CRISIS —*

BOB: Actually, the history of the DC universe that Marv intended was announced four years ago.

PAT: *Okay, but the question I was asking is — do you think that the average fan, who does not read every single word that comes out in the fan press, and has a relatively short memory for this sort of thing, unlike you and I, who tend to clutter our minds with it — will he look at the DC history, when it comes out next summer, and say, "Oh, Marvel did it. Now DC's doing it"?*

BOB: By all means. No question. Marvel did the MARVEL UNIVERSE, then they did SECRET WARS, now they're doing this, and people are going to say, "DC's a year behind Marvel, just like they always are." It's an unfortunate situation — Marvel can move faster than DC from conception to publication. We spend a lot of time developing our product, and that hurts us in the marketplace, more often than not. Marvel's cranking this stuff up, spitting it out, and the fans think, "Gee, Marvel's doing all this wonderful stuff." Then DC does its version, which I hope the fan finds to be a superior product, because of the time expended on it. Then the fans think, "DC's version is only better because it had to be after Marvel did it first."

Despite Marvel's comments to the contrary, there are dealers and distributors complaining that the Dreadstar reprint title, DREADSTAR & CO., was only done to beat DC's hardcover-softcover plan — so that Marvel would again look like it was first. I found the correspondence in BUYERS GUIDE to that effect very interesting.

PAT: *Getting back to the DC history project, are you looking at a lot of corrective continuity? Looking at a story and saying "This could not have happened?"*

MARV: One of the stated premises of CRISIS when the three of us started was that anything we leave out, anything we do not state happened, did not happen, unless it's brought back. So all the stupid stuff has to be brought back again. I'm sure a lot of it will be. *(Laughter.)*

LEN WEIN: I'd like to make up a list of all the incredibly stupid things, and go out and kill all the people likely to bring them back. *(Laughter.)*

MARV: Len — that's everybody, Len.

BOB: My favorite examples: **Doug Moench** has to write Ace, the Bat-Hound, back into BATMAN, or else he never existed.

MARV: The Mopee story...

PAT: *I was going to say, the Mopee story in FLASH is the classic.*

MARV and LEN: Or the Clark Kent glasses story...

PAT: ... *the story in which Krypton did not blow up of its own accord.*

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Len Wein
Born: 12 June 1948 — Bronx, NY
Education: Some — chunk of college and world experience
Credits: Writer and editor at DC Comics and Marvel Comics at various times
Number of Teddy Bears in Collection: A multiplicity.

behind Marvel, just like they always are.'''

LEN: . . . the one with Superboy's parents floating in a crypt in outer space. . .

MARV: . . .the BATMAN story with his parents' ashes in urns in the summer home. . .

LEN: . . . or, of course, Bruce Wayne's older brother. None of those things are real, folks!

MARV: What we're trying to do: If it's not restated, it did not happen. The beauty of the way we're ending the Crisis, and the way we're rebuilding everything, is that all of that's gone. All the dumb stuff is gone, and somebody's really going to have to go out of his way to bring it back.

PAT: *You realize, of course, that a certain percentage of your "dumb stuff" was wonderful!?*

MARV: I think they may have thought it was wonderful, but I know they all thought it was dumb, too. Dumb is not necessarily a negative — it's "Oh boy, this is dumb! I'm having a great time!" I've been to a lot of "dumb" movies where I had a great time.

LEN: We haven't mentioned DC CHALLENGE #2 yet, where all the dumb stuff gets its last shot, the chance to be as foolish as possible.

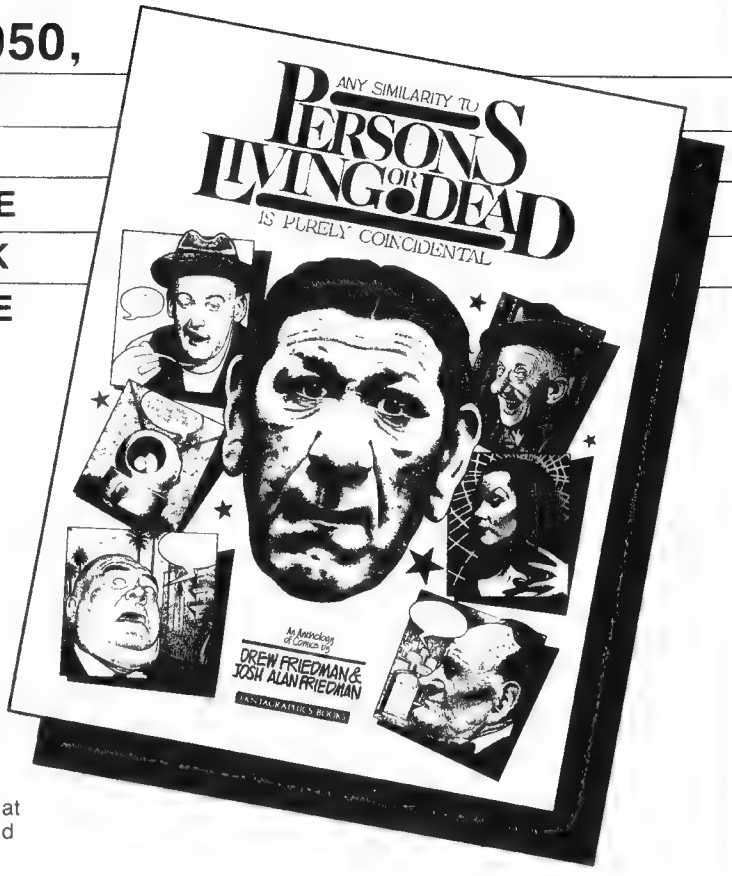
MARV: Yeah, all the stupid stuff is gone. It's corrective history. There's a big eraser that's gone over all of it. If an editor deems a character or storyline worthy enough to bring back, okay — but I don't think we should be held responsible for past mistakes. Starting in January, we only use the past that was good.

What awaits the heroes in the beyond?

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

BY THE YEAR 2050,

EVERYONE BORN IN BALTIMORE WILL LOOK LIKE ERNEST BORGNINE

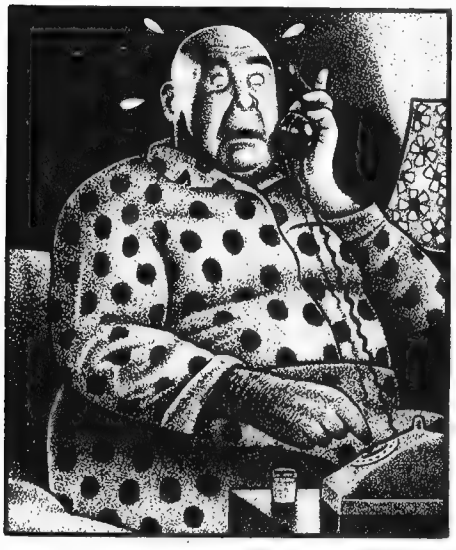


What if TV were the real world? What if America's Most Beloved Entertainers lived like. . . regular people?
Slouching off the pages of *Heavy Metal*, *High Times* and other fine publications, comes the first comprehensive collection of the work of Drew and Josh Alan Friedman, "Any Similarity to Persons Living or Dead is Purely Coincidental."

We felt it wise to put that traditional disclaimer where no one could miss it, for reasons that become obvious upon opening the book.

In the Friedman's world, it's always about 3 a.m., and superstars, half-forgotten comedians and old character actors stalk through an endless dark night of the soul, at the intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Times Square.

Watch the flickering figures of our shared cultural fantasies repeatedly slam into the more ghastly aspects of existence, with results that are as sublime as they are sleazy.



I stand in awe of Drew Friedman's technique and the certain flavor of sad old America he captures. He's the Crumb of the '80s. I love his stuff. . . He's such a wacko!
—R. Crumb

COMING IN NOVEMBER

From

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

"JULIET JONES was a helluva good ride."

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Stan Drake
Occupation: Comic-strip illustrator
Residence: Westport, CT
Credits: Artist for HEART OF JULIET JONES and BLONDIE
Hobby: Golf
Favorite Film: ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST
Favorite Music: All kinds
Favorite President: Eisenhower
Favorite Color: Golden tan-brown
Favorite Comic Strips: WASH TUBBS, LI'L ABNER, BLONDIE, DICK TRACY
Last Good Book I Read: BRING ON THE EMPTY HORSES by David Niven
Worst Mistake I Made: Getting married (first time) at age twenty-three.
For A Desert Island Stay I'd Take Along: My wife.

STAN DRAKE

The career of Stan Drake has many facets to it — from illustration to commercial art to comic strips — and all done with great skill, putting him right into the "A" class with Hal Foster and Alex Raymond. The chat that follows is very special — it captures the fun and charm of a terrific guy. It also highlights the long and varied — even romantic — life he has led — star quality! Stan is very protective of his time but was most obliging in getting together with me to do this interview. It is a rare exclusive. I'm especially proud of this piece. Enjoy!

SHEL DORF: *We're at the Hotel San Diego in San Diego, California, talking with Stan Drake. Stan, what occupies your time these days?*

STAN DRAKE: Professionally speaking, what occupies my time is work at my craft. I draw THE HEART OF JULIET JONES. I draw KELLY GREEN for a publishing company from France, Dargaud International. I draw pictures for GOLF DIGEST magazine. I am just about to start working for Marvel Comics, doing a story every six months or so. What occupies my time is work.

I get up about 6:00 and I go downstairs and make some coffee. I do not eat breakfast. I go to my little studio in the house, by the swimming pool out back, and I start working around 6:30. I work until about 9:00, at which point I bring my wife a cup of coffee in bed and kiss her goodbye. I then walk half a mile, down this long hill, to my office in the heart of Westport, Connecticut, where I start work. Having worked from 6:30, I start working at the studio and work there until noon, at which point I have lunch. I'm back at work at 1:00, and I work there until 6:30. Then I walk up the hill, and I

"I went to Hollywood and made a

sit down — and I have a martini. That's what occupies my time every day, seven days a week.

SHEL: *Let's go back a few years and see how you got to this point. Where were you born, Stan?*

STAN: I was born in Brooklyn, New York — Peck Memorial Hospital — at a very early age.

SHEL: *Were there other artists in the family?*

STAN: Yes. I never met them. My uncle on my mother's side was an artist, and I had another uncle who was an artist, and another uncle who was a doctor. All on my mother's side. Apparently, whatever genetics are involved here I guess I got from my mother's side of the family — as far as art goes.

SHEL: *The name "Drake" is famous in radio and show business, isn't it?*

STAN: Alan Drake was a radio actor. He was my father — I guess he still is. He was alive until 1967, died at the age of 87. He was a radio actor from 1934 until about 1944.

SHEL: *The golden age of radio.*

STAN: Yes.

SHEL: *What were some of the shows he was on?*

STAN: He was on GANGBUSTERS. He was Chief Niles on GANGBUSTERS. He was on the **Helen Menken** show called SECOND HUSBAND. He was on every soap opera — and radio had a *lot* of soap operas: YOUNG WIDOW BROWN; HELEN TRENT — Dad was *all* those shows.

SHEL: *BACKSTAGE WIFE?*

STAN: Oh, yes.

SHEL: *STELLA DALLAS?*

STAN: Yep — uh-huh. All those shows. He was a character actor. He was on THE KATE SMITH HOUR. Every week **Kate Smith** would have as a part of her one-hour show a fifteen-minute segment where Hollywood actors would be on her show. They would do these fifteen-minute sketches — that was her "Hollywood Actors Showcase" — and Dad was always a supporting actor. He had a hundred different dialect voices. He could do any dialect — all the high, low — vocally, he was unmatched. Finally, **Ted Collins**, who was managing **Kate Smith** in those days, said, "Al, why don't you do a guest spot on our show?" So he did.

I guess the highlight of Dad's career was appearing on THE KATE SMITH HOUR and being ballyhooed as "**Alan Drake**, the man of a thousand voices," extolling, really, the talents of all character actors in radio at that time. There was no television then, no visual thing, just the radio — so they used their voices — changed their voices. So, Dad did this fifteen-minute thing where he went from one dialect to another. Dad really amazed me.

SHEL: *As a child, did you go down to the radio stations and watch him?*

STAN: Oh yeah. I grew up in Radio City. *(Laughter.)* I really did! I met them all. Well, **Art Carney** — who else did I meet? Oh, I met so many people in radio in those days who are now doing television and movies. They all *started out* in radio. Dad knew everybody. I used to follow him around — and I was a real cheap date because my dad would get me free tickets to all these radio shows. You'd say to a girl, "How'd you like to got to New York and watch a radio show being made?" and that is like asking today if you'd like to see a movie or a television show being made. I had a lot of dates.

SHEL: *Did you meet Kate Smith?*

STAN: Oh gosh, yes.

SHEL: *What kind of lady was she?*

STAN: Very heavy. *(Laughter.)*

SHEL: *Come on. I hate those "fat Kate Smith" jokes. She was such a sweet person...*

Mr. and Mrs. Ugly American strike again. Boorish behavior such as this doesn't make friends for Uncle Sam, so let's all mind our manners — 'nuff said?
Cartoon by Stan Drake.

"ONCE YOU GET IT PAST YOUR NOSE, HONEY, IT DOESN'T TASTE HALF-BAD."

screen-test with Claudette Colbert."

© 1978 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Kelly Green, drawn by Stan Drake for the 1983 San Diego Con Souvenir Program book.

STAN: Oh, hold on now — no-no-no! The Steel Butterfly, kid. **Kate Smith** was no dummy. She was not all smiles and flowers. **Kate Smith** was her own lady. She was a *lady* — and she was *tough*! Believe me, that was a big act — the smiles and the voice. That was **Kate Smith** for the world.

SHEL: *But backstage?*

STAN: Don't get me wrong — she was a delightful woman. I'm not saying there was anything wrong with **Kate Smith**, nothing wrong. But, boy, she *ran* that show!

SHEL: *Was she hard on the people that worked for her? Abbott and Costello worked for her at one time, didn't they?*

STAN: Yes, that's right. And she was hard on 'em — tough lady.

SHEL: *Why?*

STAN: She expected perfection. She was a perfectionist, and she *expected* it. Her attitude was that if you're a professional you should be perfect, and if she'd wanted amateurs she'd've hired 'em.

SHEL: *But she never showed this to the public?*

STAN: Never. **Kate Smith** was "God Bless America" and this wonderful woman — and she *was* a wonderful woman. Nothing wrong with **Kate Smith** — it was just that on actors, boy, she was tough! And listen, if I was **Kate Smith** I would have expected these people I'd hired to work — she paid good bucks.

SHEL: *I got the impression that Ted Collins was the tough one.*

STAN: Yeah, he was tough. But, he didn't run Kate, boy! He didn't run **Kate Smith**! He was tough on everybody else, but if he started to get tough on Kate she'd give him a look like you wouldn't believe. I saw it many times. She'd just turn around and look at him, and he would direct his thing at someone else. He was tough, but he didn't get tough with Kate. He treated her very nicely.

SHEL: *I have a lot of her records. Her voice...*

STAN: Oh, what a pure, bell-like voice she had. Well, those were the good old days.

SHEL: *When did you become interested in drawing?*

STAN: First grade. I drew a whole little Santa Claus thing, with little reindeers, and I remember **Miss Barkman**, my first grade teacher... See, I can go back that far because all this information is stored in my old brain. *(Laughter.)* Anything you want to get out of my cortex like yesterday's meals, forget it. But the old memories I can go back. Anyway, **Miss Barkman** hung up my little Santa Claus thing — first grade. I never passed math in my life, ever, in any grade or school. Finally, they figured they had to get me out of junior high school and into high school some way, so they just decided to make a special exception in my case. They kept me back one year, that was the tragedy of my life, because I couldn't pass math. I had a block there. Finally, the teachers came over to my mother and said, "We're going to put Stanley into high school anyway, even though he hasn't passed math. He's good in everything else." So, anyway, I got into high school against the rules.

SHEL: *Were you drawing at the time?*

STAN: Oh, yeah. Drawing drawing drawing drawing...

SHEL: *What kind of things did you draw?*

STAN: Well, of course, comics...

SHEL: *Was it cartooning, or was it more realistic?*

STAN: It was realistic — more realistic. Just drawing anything: faces, funny characters, a serious man holding a gun, Mickey Mouse, Popeye. I copied and traced a lot of things.

PETER HSU'S
QUADRANT
NUMBER TWO
$1.50
HELLRAZOR
THE SAGA CONTINUES
Quadrant #5
"HELLRAZOR" moves swiftly towards a deadly climax as Orista battles the hordes of the Purgator! Her friends, Ryan the Elf and Gogmagog, attempt a desperate rescue, unaware that the Demon within her is still alive, and is about to destroy all about her!
Quadrant #5 is 32 pages, b/w on white newsprint with four color cover. Price $1.95. Limited print run of 5,000 only.
Recommended for more mature readers.
Shipping September to October. Order Now!

"My God! I was Susan Hayward's date!"

© 1964 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

SHEL: *What were the leading comic strips of the day?*

STAN: WASH TUBBS. BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES. FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS. I remember being enamored of WASH TUBBS. Oh boy, was that my strip!

SHEL: *These were cartoonists. Did you also admire the illustrators?*

STAN: No, not yet. I was too young in those days. I'm talking about ten-years-old, eleven-years-old.

SHEL: *When did you realize that there might be a career for you in comic strips?*

STAN: Not until I got out of the Army in 1946. My father was an actor and, of course, I wanted to be like Dad. When I was twenty — it was very strange — I had nothing to do with it — a girlfriend of mine entered my picture in a contest in Hollywood for a Paramount Pictures screen test. And I won this contest over thousands, hundreds of thousands of people! I went to Hollywood and I made a Paramount screen test. Of course, obviously, I was just absolutely smitten by this. I mean, there I was in Hollywood. *My God!* I was at the Tracadero nightclub! I was **Susan Hayward**'s date, and she was just a starlet at the time! I made a screen-test with **Claudette Colbert**! I was — well, wouldn't you have been like just knocked out of your socks on a thing like this?

So I was — boy, was I gonna be an actor! I was out there in Hollywood and I made this test and **Mark Sandridge**, who produced and directed most of — well, some of the **Fred Astaire** and **Ginger Rogers** musicals, saw my test. They were looking for a group of youths to be in a series called JANIE, which was to be in competition with ANDY HARDY, which was M-G-M at the time. Paramount wanted a thing like ANDY HARDY. They figured, **Stan Drake**, this kid is a nice, good-looking kid, we think he's got enough on the ball to put him in our dramatic school and get him into this JANIE series as one of the — not a leading star — just one of the gang. One of the nice kids. Maybe I was gonna be a bad guy or something — I don't know. **Mark Sandridge** himself knocked on my hotel room door. I remember, the night after I made this test, I opened the door and there stood **Mark Sandridge**. I was only twenty-years-old. I didn't know what to say to this great man. I just wondered what he was doing there. He told me that he had seen the rushes of the test, and he told be about the JANIE thing and asked could I stay out there. And I said, "Boy, I'll stay out here!" And he said, "We'll send you to our dramatic school at Paramount." And the next day the Japs bombed Pearl Harbor.

WHY, DENNY— WHY?
YOU KNOW TOO MUCH, MISS JONES. I'M NO FOOL. YOU'LL STAY HERE UNTIL I FINISH MY BUSINESS WITH CAL PEDDY.
STAN DRAKE
3-11

Above and below: Cliffhanger from Stan Drake's suspense soap opera, THE HEART OF JULIET JONES.

So, there went my career. I had to go home. I called up my parents and they said, "Listen, you better come home. Everybody's going to be drafted. If you wanna get into the Service you want you better join up." That was the end of Hollywood for me.

SHEL: *What branch of the Service did you join?*

STAN: I joined the Engineers because they told me that it was a camouflage section that required painting and things like that. So, the first job I got in the Camoufleurs, as they called them, was directing a gang of guys out on an airport runway with these huge vats of paint. We painted the runways — that was my contribution to World War II — so they couldn't bee seen from the air. I stayed in the unit for 3½ years. Finally, they sent us over to the Marianas Islands where they flew the atomic bombs from the island of Tinian. The **Enola Gay** was sitting right there. We saw it every day. We didn't know — it was just another plane — but there it was.

SHEL: *Did you do any drawing for the camp newspapers or anything?*

PRESERVING A SENSE OF WONDER...

COMICS & COMIX

FANTASY GAMES

T-SHIRTS

JAPANESE TOYS

ANIMATION

ALTERNATIVE COMIX

BUTTONS

NEW COMICS

SCIENCE FICTION

COLLECTABLES

FILM PUBLICATIONS

GREETING CARDS

FAIRFIELD
Solano Mall 94533
707/427-1202

BERKELEY
2461 Telegraph 94704
415/845-4091

CITRUS HEIGHTS
6135 Sunrise 95610
916/969-0717

SACRAMENTO
921 K Street Mall 95814
916/442-5142

SAN FRANCISCO
700 Lombard 94133
415/982-3511

PALO ALTO
405 California 94306
415/328-8100

SAN FRANCISCO
650 Irving 94122
415/665-5888

"I've used all my wives as models."

STAN: Yeah. To make a long story short, my outfit was scheduled to go overseas and I got appendicitis and was kept in the hospital. While I was in the hospital my whole unit moved overseas and they were all killed at Anzio (Italy). The 936 Engineers was decimated, and I was saved because I had an appendicitis attack and was still in the States. So, while I was there I was attached to the base newspaper at the Columbia Army Airbase. I did a little feature called PENNY PX, about a girl who worked in the PX. It was my first real published work.

SHEL: *Did you have MALE CALL in your paper?*

STAN: Oh, yes. Every week. **Milton Caniff**'s MALE CALL — we couldn't wait, we could not wait to get his MALE CALL.

SHEL: *After you got out of the Army, the camouflage unit of the Engineer Corps, what did you decide? Were you going to pick up your acting career?*

STAN: Well, yes. I got out of the Army and at first I didn't give a damn what I was going to do. I just was out of the Army and I had fun for a week or so, and I was married. I got married during the war, before I went overseas, to a southern girl in Columbia, South Carolina. When I first met her she told me, "You know, mah brother's name is Stanley and mah father's name is Stanley, so Ah'mm gonna call you **Drake**." *(Laughter.)* So, for our whole marriage she called me **Drake**.

Anyway, I got out of the Army and met my wife in Columbia, South Carolina, and took her up North to my poor family living in Hackensack, New Jersey. Now, **Betty Lou Smith** was from a *very* wealthy Southern family — huge house with columns in front — and she didn't know where this soldier was gonna take her. So, I brought her up to Hackensack, New Jersey, to this walk-up flat on Lehi Street, and she almost shit a brick! I thought that she was gonna leave me right there! But anyway, we moved out to a Levittown house on Long Island and my life began.

That was when I met with **Art Carney** and my father, and I said, "Listen, I don't know whether I want to be an actor or an artist." **Carney** advised me that 85% of all actors in Actor's Equity are out of work at any one time, and that it's a very precarious life, and that if you're going to be smart, with a wife, you better not fool around acting because you could go five years without a job. You *might* get one, or you *might not* — so I heeded his advice and went into the art business.

I did some samples and took 'em to a job placement agency. Right after the war we had these job placement agencies because there was *nobody* in New York. You could get a job *anywhere*. Everybody wanted artists for advertising agencies because everybody was still in the Army — so when I got out, I got a job right away.

SHEL: *I imagine you were pretty good, too...*

STAN: No.

SHEL: *No?*

STAN: No. I've always been able to draw, but not well, At that stage, boy, was I learning! I didn't know anything about how to draw. I had this basic gut talent, but a professional I was not. I learned on the job. I got a job in an advertising agency and I learned by looking at other guys' stuff what I had better learn how to do.

SHEL: *Did you ever take classes under an art teacher?*

STAN: Well, before the war, in '38-'39, I did take life drawing classes with **George Bridgman**, anatomical instruction.

SHEL: *This is the famous Bridgman?*

STAN: Famous **Bridgman** books? Yeah, that's George. There he was, 85 years old.

SHEL: *What school was he with?*

STAN: Art Students League.

SHEL: *A world-famous place of study. Very respected.*

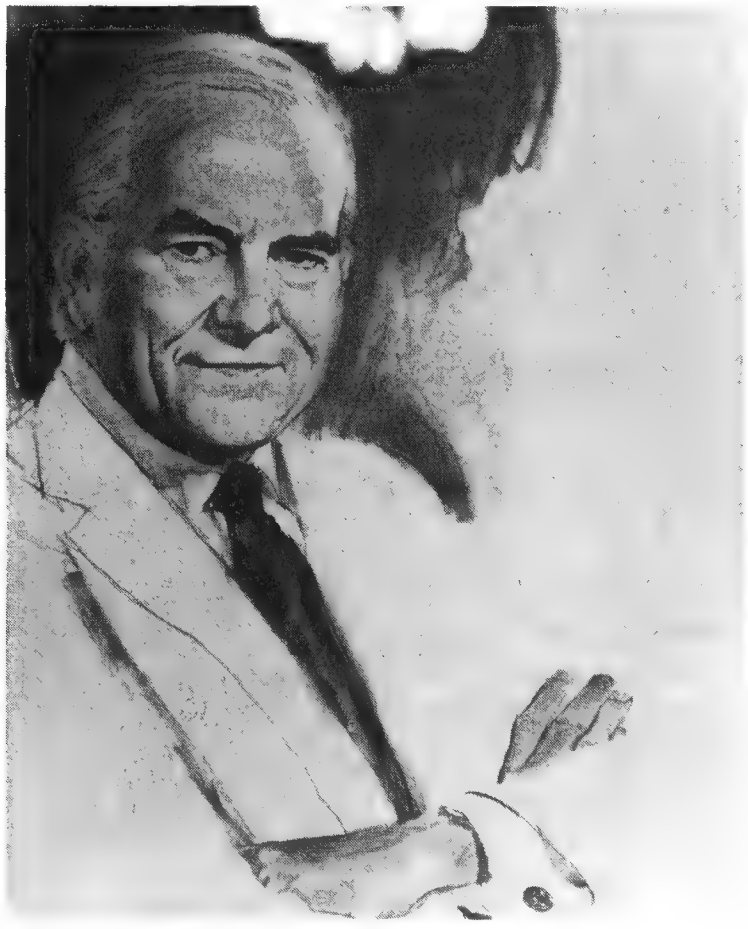
SHEL: *I had anatomy at the Chicago School of the Art Institute. What we did, we had kind of a scientific approach. We looked up in the anatomy books, and were instructed to copy the skeleton, every bone. Draw every bone in the skeleton...*

STAN: Oh, wow! Oh, God!

SHEL: *Then draw every muscle, and where it begins and ends and where it's attached to the bone. Then we'd put the flesh on. What was Bridgman's approach?*

STAN: Nothing like that. **Bridgman**'s approach was to come into the room in his black suit and the gold chain across the vest and the watch in the pocket, dressed *a la* 1890. He would stand there and would snap his fingers like this *(snaps fingers authorita-*

Milton Caniff — one of many portraits of fellow cartoonists done by Stan Drake.



"ONE OF THE BEST SUPER-GROUP COMICS BEING PUBLISHED TODAY--CERTAINLY ONE OF THE TOP FIVE."
--Don Thompson
COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

VS.

SYNERGY

A FEMALE TEAM OF IDENTICAL QUADRUPLETS WITH STRANGE POWERS!

A COMICS INTERVIEW PUBLICATION
FICTIONEER BOOKS, LTD. • 234 FIFTH AVE. • SUITE 301-G • NEW YORK, NY 10001

"I couldn't move my arms."

© 1978 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

tively) and the class monitor, the guy who was in charge of the class, would then go out and bring in the model. She would have a robe on. **Bridgman** would direct her up to the podium and she would sit on this stool or stand there or assume a pose, and remove her robe. She was naked. We had our pads and our charcoal. Then **Bridgman** would go down to the corner of the room where, up above him, was this big blackboard, and he would take this long stick — it must have been three-feet long, with a little clip on the end where you could put a piece of chalk — and he would stand there and with this long stick make sketches of this body in the position that he wanted to be posed that day. He would just zoom-zoom-zoom, zoom-zoom-zoom, and all the muscle would be right there. A flick of the finger and the whole *gluteus maximus* would be in. Then he'd go down and the calf muscle would be in. Then, we would begin drawing and he'd disappear. This was Monday morning. He wouldn't come back until Friday. That model would assume that position all week long, and everybody would draw that figure from any position they wanted to — three or four different drawings.

SHEL: *When he came in on Friday, would he critique the drawings?*

STAN: Yeah. He would go around and take a chamois and wipe everybody's work off — and show them how it should have been done. Very tough. That was my art instruction.

I figured about halfway through this course that this was not art instruction for me. I wasn't learning a goddamn thing about illustration. **Bridgman** was just erasing my stuff at the end of the week!

SHEL: *What a strange approach.*

STAN: *Yeah, very.*

SHEL: *Maybe his books were better than he was.*

STAN: I would say so. As an instructor, I would say so. *Lousy* instructor. *But*, he knew every bone, every muscle. He knew how it connected, and he would show you. And it didn't *mean* anything — and to this day I haven't drawn a nude figure.

SHEL: *I wouldn't say that. I've seen KELLY GREEN.*

STAN: Oh. Well, those aren't muscles. That's flesh — a lot different. That's the image of the female rather than what **Brigdman** was teaching.

SHEL: *Stan, let's go back to when you got out of the Army and you started looking for a job in the commercial art world of New York. What was your first job?*

STAN: My first job was with a studio, **Perlowin** Studios. **Paul Perlowin** and **George Perlowin**, his father, ran this commercial art studio. Anything the salesmen went out and got they would bring in: products, people, cartoons. They noticed that my penchant was for people — gestures and things — presenters. So, they had me doing that, and then a little color.

SHEL: *Did these ads ever appear in LIFE MAGAZINE or some of the other more renowned publications?*

STAN: No-no-no. This was kind of a second-class studio, as opposed to the better, big studios in New York City. A smaller studio — and they had smaller accounts. Their accounts were house organs and things like that.

SHEL: *How long did you work for them?*

STAN: A little over a year.

SHEL: *And then where did you go?*

STAN: I went to a highly respected place called **Johnstone and Cushing**. They did these advertising strips for newspapers —

THERE ARE MORE RESTAURANTS IN AMERICA FEATURING FOREIGN FOODS THAN ANY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. THAT'S PROOF THAT WE LIKE AND APPRECIATE FOREIGN COOKING.

Juliet Jones speaks out! No argument here, Julie — better speak to that couple in the Japanese restaurant!

"The author of GONE WITH THE WIND

I BROKE THE LAW, MR. GABELLE!? BUT HOW?
YOU'VE BEEN AIDIN' AN' ABETTIN' CERTAIN PARTIES IN TOWN T' MANUFACTURE AN' SELL CERTAIN PRODUCTS!... SO FAR, YOU GOT ANY ARGUMENT?
NO.
...AN' THESE CERTAIN PARTIES HAVE BEEN COMMITTIN' A CRIMINAL ACTION BY BEIN' IN BUSINESS WITHOUT NO LICENSE, NOR PAYIN' THE VILLAGE SALES TAX!

Above and below: Juliet Jones is helpless before the most dreaded arch-villain of all: the Tax Collector.

like PETER PAYNE and so on. Pretty soon I was making $20,000 a year — and $20,000 a year in those days is equivalent to about $100,000 a year now. So I was really, boy, going great! I had a house. I owned a house.

SHEL: *So, here you are, living the life of a prosperous commercial artist. Had you any thoughts about doing a comic strip at this point?*

STAN: No. I was working for **Johnstone and Cushing** — I worked for them for two years. Then, I got into a ruckus with **Tom Johnstone**. I brought in an account worth thousands of dollars, and I felt that I should get a finder's fee for this account.

SHEL: *Of course.*

STAN: He said, "You'll get just what you always get." So, I picked up the work I had just brought in and said thank you very much, and I turned around and walked out of the studio. So, he got nothing. That finished me with **Johnstone and Cushing**. So, I got together with **Bob Lubbers**, who was doing comic books for Fiction House at the time, and **John Celardo**, who was also doing comic books, and...

SHEL: *Where did you meet these fellows?*

STAN: Oh, I knew Bob from art school, and **Johnny Celardo**. So, there the three of us were on 45th Street and Fifth Avenue, in a studio, and they were turning out comic books and I was doing advertising spots and things.

SHEL: *Pretty girls talking on the phone — things like that?*

STAN: Yeah. Holding up boxes of Rinso; stuff like that. Palmolive Soap ads — little girl figures dancing around a cake of soap. I got very very busy and made a lot of money and decided, "This is crazy — I'm gonna open my own studio where I'm gonna hire and let people make *me* money — where I don't have to do it all with my hands." So, I opened up a studio called **Drake-Kittelsen** with a fellow named **Harry Kittelsen**. He was a lettering man. We had this studio where we specialized in line-art — spots and things. There was a lot of it in newspapers in those days, and there's none of it today. Clip-art today. In those days it was all original art from the studio. I got so busy. I was getting better and better in my techniques and my methods. Everybody was buying my stuff. I was deluged with work. I'm talking about 1950...

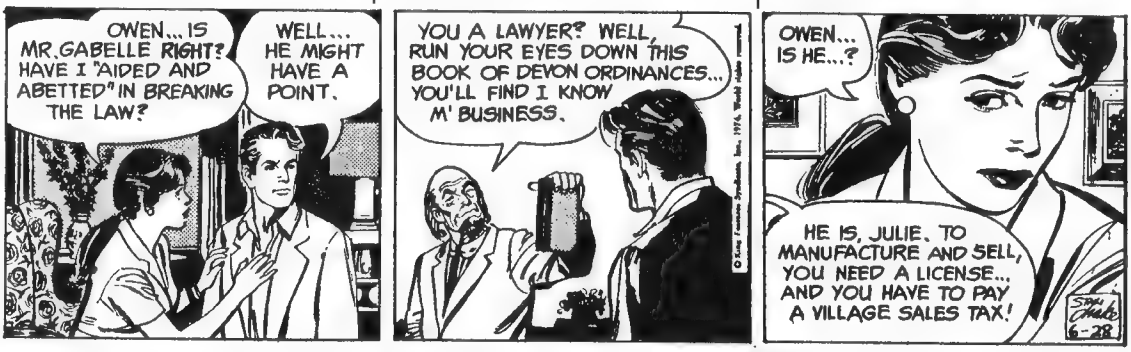
SHEL: *And were you now getting in LIFE MAGAZINE?*

STAN: Oh, yes. Now it was in all publications, big newspapers. I had a whole Nescafe account — big newspapers — NEW YORK TIMES. By this time it was really going national.

SHEL: *Were you known? I mean, you couldn't sign your name...*

STAN: Oh, I signed my name. I figured if **Al Dorn** and those guys could sign their names, I was gonna sign my name. So I did. Anyway, I got very very busy. In those days, I was making $1500 a week. You're talking about making $5000 a week today — with inflation and stuff. *But*, I was working 20 hours a day. I had a nervous breakdown. Well, I don't know if it was a nervous breakdown. It was a physical exhaustion.

I just absolutely could not get out of bed one morning, and I couldn't talk. I couldn't move my arms. It was nature saying, "You are immobilized." The brain was saying, "I'm not gonna do this for you anymore." I've got this theory that every part of the body, other than our brain, every part of our body was built just to carry the brain around. The legs, the arms, everything is subservient to the brain. Without the brain, everything else you've got, man, is totally useless. The brain was telling my body, *"Hey!"* and I had the nervous exhaustion attack. I was in bed for two weeks. I couldn't speak. I got spastic colitis. I got everything you can imagine. I was like this from all this work — just work work work work — and **Bob Lubbers**, my old friend from art school, called me up one day, he was doing TARZAN at the time, and he said, "Listen, why don't you get smart? Don't commute to New York from Long Island anymore. Don't go


OWEN... IS MR. GABELLE RIGHT? HAVE I "AIDED AND ABETTED" IN BREAKING THE LAW?
WELL... HE MIGHT HAVE A POINT.
YOU A LAWYER? WELL, RUN YOUR EYES DOWN THIS BOOK OF DEVON ORDINANCES... YOU'LL FIND I KNOW M' BUSINESS.
OWEN... IS HE...?
HE IS, JULIE. TO MANUFACTURE AND SELL, YOU NEED A LICENSE... AND YOU HAVE TO PAY A VILLAGE SALES TAX!

© 1974 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

was conned into writing a comic strip."

through that rat race. You're killing yourself already, at age thiry!" And he said, "Why don't you take some of those samples up to King Features? It's the biggest syndicate in the world. Get a comic strip. You could do a comic strip, and you could work at home, and you could relax." So, I took his advice.

SHEL: *Had you created a comic strip?*

STAN: No-no-no.

SHEL: *All you brought to them was your ability as an illustrator, then?*

STAN: Well, yes, as an illustrator. But, don't forget, at **Johnstone and Cushing** I had done a lot of comic strips for advertising — PETER PAYNE, stuff like that. Colgate toothpaste; Ipana tootpaste — it would be John meets Mary, but John's teeth are black, so then he uses Ipana toothpaste, and now he wins the girl. This used to be in the Sunday comics. They looked like a comic strip, so I took those up to King Features and said, "I can adapt this to a comic strip."

SHEL: *Did you talk to Sylvan Byck?*

STAN: Yes, of course. He was the comics editor. He loved my work. He thought it was fabulous. He put it in a drawer and said, "Listen, go home and write a story about something — maybe a couple of girls and their father, living in a small town." He knew what he was talking about because he knew that was what **Ward Greene** had wanted to do. He was simply passing on to me the hint — what kind of a story to write. **Ward Green** had been dickering fifteen years previously with **Margaret Mitchell**, who wrote GONE WITH THE WIND, and he had conned **Margaret Mitchell** into writing a soap opera for the **Hearst** newspapers. They were gonna pay her a prodigious sum. **Ward Greene** wanted a strip called THE HEART OF *something*, the final name hadn't been figured out yet. **Margaret Mitchell** had about 30 pages written when she was struck by a car and killed. For fifteen years **Ward Green**, who wrote LADY AND THE TRAMP and SCAMP — a great journalist, a fine Southern gentleman, a wonderful man, a hell of an intelligent journalist — was looking for somebody to do this feature. When he saw my work, he said, "This is the man I want." So, **Sylvan Byck** got the word from up above, from **Ward Greene**.

SHEL: *They didn't use those 30 pages Margaret Mitchell wrote?*

STAN: No. I don't know whether they had intended to or not. But, in the meantime, I tried to write. I was 30 years old, and I had never written anything in my life. I figured, "I'm not gonna be successful — this has got to be a call for a pro." I asked **Gil Fox** if he knew of anybody that we could go to. Gil said, "Why don't you try **Elliot Caplin**? He's doing BIG BEN BOLT. He's writing ABBIE AN' SLATS for his brother, Al, who used to write it for **Ray Van Buren**." I went up to **Elliot Caplin**'s office, and Elliot liked my stuff very much and said, "Okay. I'm gonna go over to King Features Syndicate, and I'm gonna tell 'em about you." So, he went over there. He said to **Sylvan Byck**, "Listen, I've got a guy here — I'm gonna write a story for this man. We're gonna do a strip." And **Sylvan Byck** says, "No. You haven't got a guy. I've got the guy." Elliot said, "No-no! Wait a minute, please. I don't want to see your guy. *I've* got the guy for the strip." Sylvan said, "No, you don't. *I've* got the guy!" Sylvan opens his drawer and Elliot opens his satchel, and they both put **Stan Drake**'s work on the table. *(Laughter.)* That's the truth — true story. So, they said, *"Voila!* We've got the guy for THE HEART OF —." JULIET JONES was decided upon. Juliet for romance, as in ROMEO AND JULIET, and Jones, a typical American name. So, it became THE HEART OF JULIET JONES.

SHEL: *Amazing story! How much of a lead time did you get on this strip before it appeared in the papers?*

STAN: Twelve weeks.

SHEL: *Twelve weeks? Were you able to do six dailies and a Sunday very fast? What was your schedule?*

Stan (age 23) in 1945, at the art board for the Army Air Corps Special Services.

ON SALE NOW, AT ALL THE BEST COMIC STORES:

COMICS FROM ENGLAND -WITH CARE!

Harrier Publishing, 3 Marlow Court, Britannia Square, Worcester WR1 3DP, England

"The money has been going downhill."

© 1983 Dargaud Editeur

STAN: I had no schedule in those days. They just told me to get ahead — "We'll tell you when to stop. Do it as fast as you can. Just do it." So, I started out just doing it. I didn't have any schedule. I just tried to do this work. How would I know how long it was going to take? I did it until I got it done, and then they wanted me to be twelve weeks ahead.

SHEL: *In the writing, did Elliot actually tell you what the composition should be for each panel?*

STAN: No. No-no-no. Elliot writes a script that goes like this:

THE HEART OF JULIET JONES

DATE: _____

PANEL #1: EVE: BUT, JULIE, I DIN'T KNOW YOU FELT THAT WAY.
JULIE: EVE, I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU FOR THREE WEEKS...
PANEL #2: JULIE: ...THAT I AM NOT GOING TO SEE THE DOCTOR!
EVE: OH, JULIE, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?
PANEL #3: EVE LEAVES THE ROOM, THROWING A MOCKING HAND AT JULIE.

That's all that he says. That's the way he writes a script. Or, you'll open the second page: LONG SHOT OF NEW YORK CITY. So, what I do is I'll draw a head of Eve looking out the window, saying, "Wow! What a beautiful city." 'Cause, there's no way I'm gonna draw a long shot of New York City. *(Laughter.)* Anyway, that's the way he writes.

SHEL: *How many papers did you have when you started?*

STAN: We started... before it was published we had 98 papers.

SHEL: *Whew! That's good!*

STAN: Well, it was a good lead in those days. In those days it was a tremendous advance. It was the second best after the one **Caniff** got for STEVE CANYON.

SHEL: *Oh. I've heard the name.*

STAN: Well, there's this fellow I know named **Shel Dorf** who works with **Caniff**, and I think he knows me. Anyway, I had no idea where it was going — no one did. But, it kept going up and up and up. I was getting a report every month on sales and I was picking up 20 and 30 papers a month. And it went up and up. It went up to 100 — 200 — 300 — 400 — 500 — 600 papers.

SHEL: *Was this because of the efforts of the King Features salesmen going around the country to different papers? How did you do it?*

STAN: It was their efforts. But, it was also the day of editors wanting the kind of art I was doing, being enamored of it. Having seen it, and liking it — beautiful girls and a good story — they were all in favor of it. Hardly any paper was turning us down. It was just great. They were selling like crazy. So, I was getting more and more money, more and more money, and I finally figured, at age 30, that I'd hit the jackpot. "I've got THE HEART OF JULIET JONES, and it's gonna go on for 20 years!" Well, it's gone for 31 years now. But, actually, 20 years was the money that was worthwhile — the jackpot. The last ten years the money has been going downhill.

SHEL: *There's something very magical about looking at the comic page and the most beautifully drawn strip is THE HEART OF JULIET JONES. Your eye goes right to it. It's really an illustrator's work on the comic page. You, Milt Caniff and Hal Foster — and Leonard Starr, when he was doing ON STAGE — are really the only illustrators working on the comic page.*

STAN: I wonder if it's the place for it.

SHEL: *Of course not.*

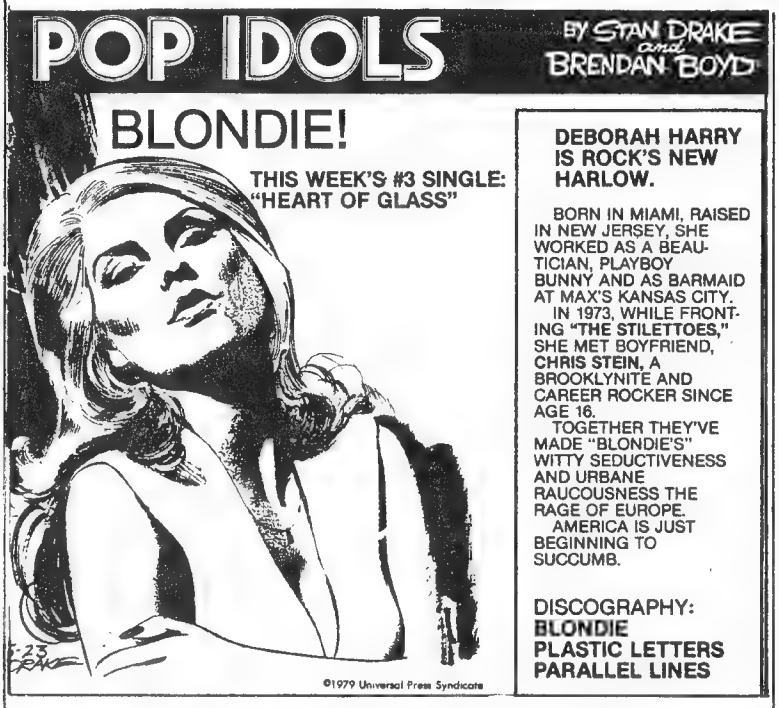
STAN: No?

SHEL: *Of course not. You're being shrunk You're being chopped to pieces...*

STAN: *Yeah.* They're just *killing* us!

SHEL: *The trend, nowadays, is for the gag-a-day strip.*

"You can make a woman look sexy with


POP IDOLS
BY STAN DRAKE and BRENDAN BOYD
BLONDIE!
THIS WEEK'S #3 SINGLE: "HEART OF GLASS"
DEBORAH HARRY IS ROCK'S NEW HARLOW.
BORN IN MIAMI, RAISED IN NEW JERSEY, SHE WORKED AS A BEAUTICIAN, PLAYBOY BUNNY AND AS BARMAID AT MAX'S KANSAS CITY.
IN 1973, WHILE FRONTING "THE STILETTOES," SHE MET BOYFRIEND, CHRIS STEIN, A BROOKLYNITE AND CAREER ROCKER SINCE AGE 16.
TOGETHER THEY'VE MADE "BLONDIE'S" WITTY SEDUCTIVENESS AND URBANE RAUCOUSNESS THE RAGE OF EUROPE.
AMERICA IS JUST BEGINNING TO SUCCUMB.
DISCOGRAPHY:
BLONDIE
PLASTIC LETTERS
PARALLEL LINES
©1979 Universal Press Syndicate

From a series "Pop Idols" which Stan illustrated.

STAN: Gag-a-day — and the editors are staying away from story strips. They're dropping them, and it's going down and down. *But*, it was a helluva good ride. I have no regrets.

SHEL: *Stan, as you were doing this strip, were you also doing commercial accounts?*

STAN: As I look back on those early days of JULIET, I didn't need to do it. The money was so good. I remember that I didn't do anything else. I played golf. I was living a good life in those days. I had an assistant doing the backgrounds. I would to the layouts and the figures, and have this guy do all the chairs and trees and tables and houses and lamps. I'd just draw the people, and we would get it done in three days — the whole week. The dailies and the Sunday page — three days. Then, we'd play golf for the rest of the week. Those were the good ol' days.

SHEL: *Did you have much rapport with the other cartoonists in the area where you lived?*
STAN: Yeah. The area had all kinds of cartoonists — loaded with 'em.
SHEL: *And your marriage to Betty Lou?*
STAN: I divorced her in 1960, so I was only with her for seven years.
SHEL: *Let's talk a little about your technique — does your wife model for the strip?*
STAN: Oh, yeah. Yes. I've used all of my wives as models. *(Laughter.)* Any girl that's around me at the time that I need a model, I'll use 'em. I found out very quickly that speed was of the essence in this work, because it was so relentless. It's absolutely relentless — week after week after week — it was a deadline, a newspaper deadline, and there was no surcease. No let up. That was it.
SHEL: *Do you have any shortcuts that you use to get around this?*
STAN: The problems that an artist has, if he's doing the kind of work that I do, is winding up with the finished product that looks real and has a realistic touch — which is beyond just scribbles and drawing and trying to make somebody look real. In my feature, I wanted these people to be really real. If a guy was sitting in a chair with a suit on, I didn't want this stiff-looking thing of a cement suit sitting in a chair. I wanted it to look real. So, the Polaroid camera helped me immeasurably. I buy Polaroid film by the case. I have a self-timer on the camera. I'll use that, or I'll have my wife or somebody photograph me, for the men. I would sit in a chair in the attitude required by the strip, and then I would have a Polaroid shot, just like that. In less than a minute we'd have this picture of a man sitting in a chair, absolutely perfect, all of the folds in the suit, to be used as a guide. My work took on a look of authority that it needed. There's just no way that you can do that. When the drawing lines are correct, then we know that the technique on top of it is correct.
SHEL: *You made a statement once, that no matter how good the technique is, if the drawing isn't there, then it's still lousy.*
STAN: Yeah, and it becomes boring. You've got to have good drawing. If you've got the good drawing there, you can ink it in with a toothbrush. So, I made up my mind that I wanted my stuff to look real, and I would have gestures I would photograph. If I was saying to the guy, "You go out that door and turn that way," I'd pose myself like this and take that picture. That's just some kind of a pose you would never think of. You'd exaggerate — but here's my old acting thing. I was directing myself as though I were an actor. I would pose myself. I was trying to get some *motion* and *action* into the *gestures*, which is all I had, really. Soap opera is gestures and action. And so, I took the Polaroid camera and put it to use, and used up a lot of bucks on Polaroid film.
SHEL: *You said something earlier — you have an attitude about women's hair that you were telling me about.*
STAN: Okay, Shel — we were talking about portraying sexiness in women. The typical approach to drawing sexy women is to draw them with large busts and round, protruding fannies and shapely legs — but that's kind of gotten to be a *cliche*. It can be crass, and it can be caricatured. I say that you don't need to do all that. You can just draw a pretty girl with natural proportions, but, boy, you give her nice, fluffy hair. "Fluffy" is my term — draw the hair so that it looks like real hair that's blowing in the wind. When a woman walks, her hair does not sit still. Most guys, when they draw a woman's hair, it's like it's been sprayed with plastic — it doesn't move. Hair moves. The most movable part of a woman's body; besides her ass, is her beautiful *hair*. If you're gonna draw hair, learn how to do it with thin strokes. Make it fluffy, not just shaped. Guys draw hair that, it's well done, it looks great, but it's not *alive*. Bouncing — a woman's hair should *bounce* and be fluffy. Practice that, because that is very sexy. Tell you what — shave a woman's head and have her walk down the street with a bald head. There's nothing erotic there. But take a wig, a nice, soft, blond wig, and have that flowing bhind her, and that's *sexy*, boy! You can do it with hair. You don't have to do it with *big breasts!*
SHEL: *I understand that you share a studio with Leonard Starr, who is writing and drawing ANNIE. How did the two of you come to share a studio?*
STAN: Well, Leonard lives in the same town, and we're old friends. He would call me up — I would be sitting in my studio and he would be sitting at home, having been in the house for the last nine years, 24 hours a day. Cabin fever was starting to get to Leonard, and he'd say, "Do you mind if I

fluffy hair. You don't need *big breasts!*"

come down and just sit there and maybe do some sketches this afternoon?" He did that for several days. Finally, I just said, "Lenny, why don't you just move all your stuff down here and share the place with me?" So, he did. You see, Leonard is very much the organized, automated — I mean, he's like a robot. Leonard does things, and he can't step out of that mold. Very disciplined — to the point where he gets into a way of living, and it's very difficult for him to change the rules. He drives only a certain way. He doesn't go out of his way. How he just drives home on those same roads, I don't know. Whether it's fear of being lost, or being inadequate, or being out of control, or what, I don't know. Len does not like to be out of control. He wants to be in control, and if he feels he's out of control, by taking a road he's not familiar with — it's something he tries to avoid.

SHEL: *When I knew him, he had a studio in Greenwich Village. He was doing ON STAGE, and he played classical music constantly. Does he still do that?*

STAN: Not when I'm there. I told him that I really love him, but I don't want to listen to classical music all day long because it puts me to sleep. I'm not there to sleep, so I told him, "If you want to play some rock 'n' roll so I can stay awake, fine." Leonard is the world's greatest music buff. He is an opera music fanatic.

SHEL: *Have you ever helped him out on ANNIE, if he gets behind . . .*

STAN: Never! No. I don't think he would ask me to do that. He handles that, man, he doesn't want anybody to touch his stuff!

SHEL: *Obviously, he could do your stuff.*

STAN: Oh, yeah. But, we don't have *time* to do each other's stuff. My God, we've got our own stuff to do! We're both behind! helping him, I'd lose on mine. Then he'd have to help me. Then I'd have to help him. We might as well just stay doin' what we're doin'.

SHEL: *Have you ever talked about the change he made from the illustrator style to a real big-foot cartoony style?*

STAN: Yeah, right. Speaking of which, I'll tell you something — wait'll you see what I've got to do!

SHEL: *What?*

STAN: I can't talk about it just yet.

SHEL: *Why the secret?*

STAN: Well, the deal isn't exactly down. Know what I mean?

IN PART TWO: *The secret deal revealed! Plus: the naked truth about KELLY GREEN — and much more! All in our next issue!*

Kelly Green literally belts a bad guy. From Stan Drake and Leonard Starr's KELLY GREEN #2.

© 1982 Dargaud Editeur

"We have sprung DC HEROES on people who

Mayfair Games' development team for the DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME. Left to right: Brian Reid, Sam Lewis, and Greg Gorden.

Fantasy gaming. There is a magical quality to those words, evoking images and scenes from out of the RINGS trilogy, fairy tales, ancient myths — the stories of swordslingers, sorcerers, elves, trolls, demons and dragons.

Such a concept as the role-playing game, however, is clearly much too versatile to be limited to a single genre, and has given birth to games based in science-fiction, fantasy-horror, historical war, modern war, sports, folk-heroism, industrial intrigue, espionage and counter-espionage and various other categories.

Inevitably, there came the first super-hero role playing game — CHAMPIONS — followed by VILLAINS & VIGILANTES, SUPERWORLD and, most recently, MARVEL SUPER-HEROES, THE HEROIC ROLE-PLAYING GAME. The latest addition to that list is Mayfair Games' DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME.

Darrel Boatz spoke recently with designers Greg Gorden and Sam Lewis about the DC HEROES game, and about the state of the fantasy gaming industry...

DARREL BOATZ: *Tell us something about the DC HEROES SUPERPOWERS ROLE PLAYING GAME...*
SAM LEWIS: Make a change in that title.
GREG GORDEN: We finally managed to convince the people at DC that SUPERPOWERS targeted much too young an audience. The SUPERPOWERS portion of the name has been dropped, so that the 17- and 18-year-olds won't think it's a game for two-year-olds.
DARREL: *So it's the DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME?*
GREG: As of this morning.
DARREL: *You are speaking with somebody who has never played a role-playing game. What is a role-playing game?*
GREG: The role-playing game? The in-house buzzword is quantified interactive fiction.
SAM: Storytelling.
GREG: Storytelling. What that really boils down to is — the rules give you a framework in which to participate in the types of stories you normally read. So you would take, say, Cyborg. Other people would take other characters from the TEEN TITANS and you would run through an adventure which would be like one you might read in the comic book — only *you're* making the decisions for the characters. You're actually having to "fight" the bad guys or solve the puzzle or solve the crime or whatever. That is the primary attraction. People who have read comic books or science fiction or fantasy have the chance to try to play the characters and see how it feels to act in the role of a super-hero or a fantasy character.
SAM: The primary advantage of a role-playing game over a board game is that it's totally flexible. You can continue with the same character over years' worth of play and advance, make that character better, develop the character as an alternative persona — and make him every bit as complex as a character in the books.
GREG: Probably the biggest difference, which is hard for people who play PARCHEESI and MONOPOLY to get into, is

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Sam Lewis

Born: 8 January 1955 — Hanover, NH

Current Residence: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Comptroller, Mayfair Games, Inc.

Training: A Master of Management degree from Northwestern University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Northwestern. Spent four years in the U.S. Army before joining Mayfair Games, and have held various managerial positions.

Credits: Comptroller, but also an active gamer, and designer of the boardgame DRAGONRIDERS OF PERN. Have also helped with the development of various other Mayfair products.

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Greg Gorden
Born: 28 August 1958 — Springfield, OH
Current Residence: Chicago, IL
Occupation: Freelance Game Designer
Training: Became interested in comics at age 9, and took courses in comics production at Antioch College from age 13 to 15. Entered Carleton College to obtain a degree in mathematics, but decided designing and playing games was more fun — was recruited through the SPI (Simulations Publications Incorporated) boot camp for playtesters.
Credits: Worked on JAMES BOND 007 for Victory Games, and am also writing the Q manual for the BOND game. Currently designing DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME for Mayfair Games, Inc.

have never played role-playing games before."

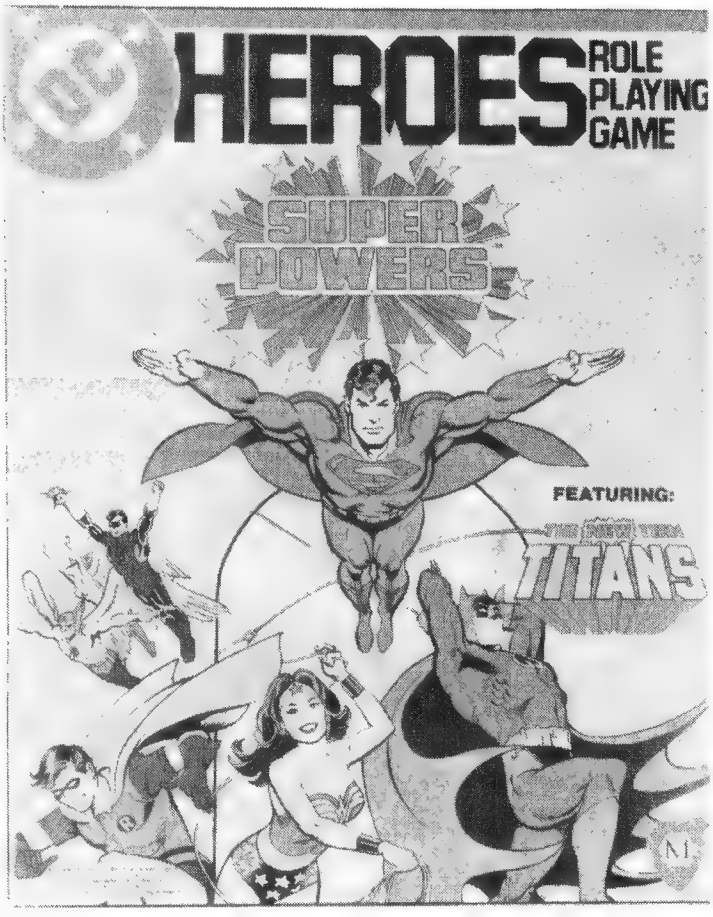
SAM LEWIS & GREG GORDEN

that in a role-playing game the players are generally all *cooperating* with one another. You're not playing to defeat the other players in the game. There is a person called the Game Master — or the Game's Monitor in the case of the DC game — who will provide the information, all the clues and the scenarios, and will act the parts of all the minor characters, the Perry Whites, the Lois Lanes, the Bethany Snows. The other characters are cooperatively trying to solve the problems, the puzzle presented them, or defeat the villains. Winning is when the whole group does well. A lot of folks who don't like the competitiveness of some other games will get along better with a role-playing game; however, for the competitive player, there is still the challenge of having to defeat Brother Blood. You have to beat the guy, otherwise he beats you. It's an interesting mix, I think, that attracts more people than traditional-style board games. That's because of the variety, the degree to which the outcome is dependent upon your input.

SAM: There's one other aspect to the role-playing game — you might have six people playing the game but only one of them, the Game Master, needs to know all of the rules. The other people don't. We've had people with 30 seconds worth of instructions sit down and have a good time playing these games.

DARREL: *How does one go about creating a DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME?*

GREG: You sit down and spend a lot of time becoming familiar with the thing you're trying to simulate. In my case, I got all the back issues — I left comics reading about 1980 — went back and got all the back issues, caught up with all the characters, tried



At right: The original cover for the DC HEROES game, with the original title, deemed "too juvenile" by the game's creators.

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc

The information in the DC HEROES game *exceeds*

to make sure that I understood where all of the characters were and what they were doing. It's a good thing that I managed to talk to DC a lot, because CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS blew a *lot* of that away! You get familiar with your characters and the way the stories tend to happen. Then you basically use some mathematical tricks and some standard rule writing. You put them into a couple of tables that say this is the way the DC Universe tends to work, these are the numbers you need to roll. And then you package rules around these. It takes a while to get tables which have the proper feel, so that it feels as if you're playing a comic book when you're using them. You start off with the general idea and from there on it's gut feeling about whether or not this works.

DARREL: *What part did each of you play in the development of DC HEROES?*

SAM: Greg is a freelancer with us, not a paid member of the staff. I am Greg's contact person within Mayfair. I'm the one who coordinates all his activities with our art department, with our editorial staff, makes sure that the playtest copies go out. I'm also doing some of the development work. The rules. Once Greg has got his tables stuff down, we need to playtest them, because the games have got to interact on a wide variety of levels. So what I and also **Brian Reid**, who isn't here, have been doing is going through the rules making sure that each individual part fits the overall scheme. I also send it out to other people across the nation who are playing active campaigns right now. They come back and say, "Super speed doesn't work. Flash did this and we can't do it with your super speed." Then we've got to change the super-speed power — things like that.

GREG: I came on the team sometime last July, and the rules version they had then didn't work, period. Around the end of August I took over the design and development. Since that point, I've basically rewritten all of the rules — so I am currently designer. The rules content, you can all yell and scream at me: I wrote it. That's my job on this one.

DARREL: *We're currently going through DC's 50th anniversary celebration. Does the game have anything to do with that celebration, or was the timing of it just a coincidence?*

SAM: As Greg said, we had a set of rules here back in July that didn't work. We were shooting for an end-of-the-year release date.

GREG: Since it happens to be a coincidence, we are trying to make the most of it. Two things are going to be important to

2/3 SOLD OUT PRE-PUB!

FOR INDIVIDUAL COPIES - $2 PPD

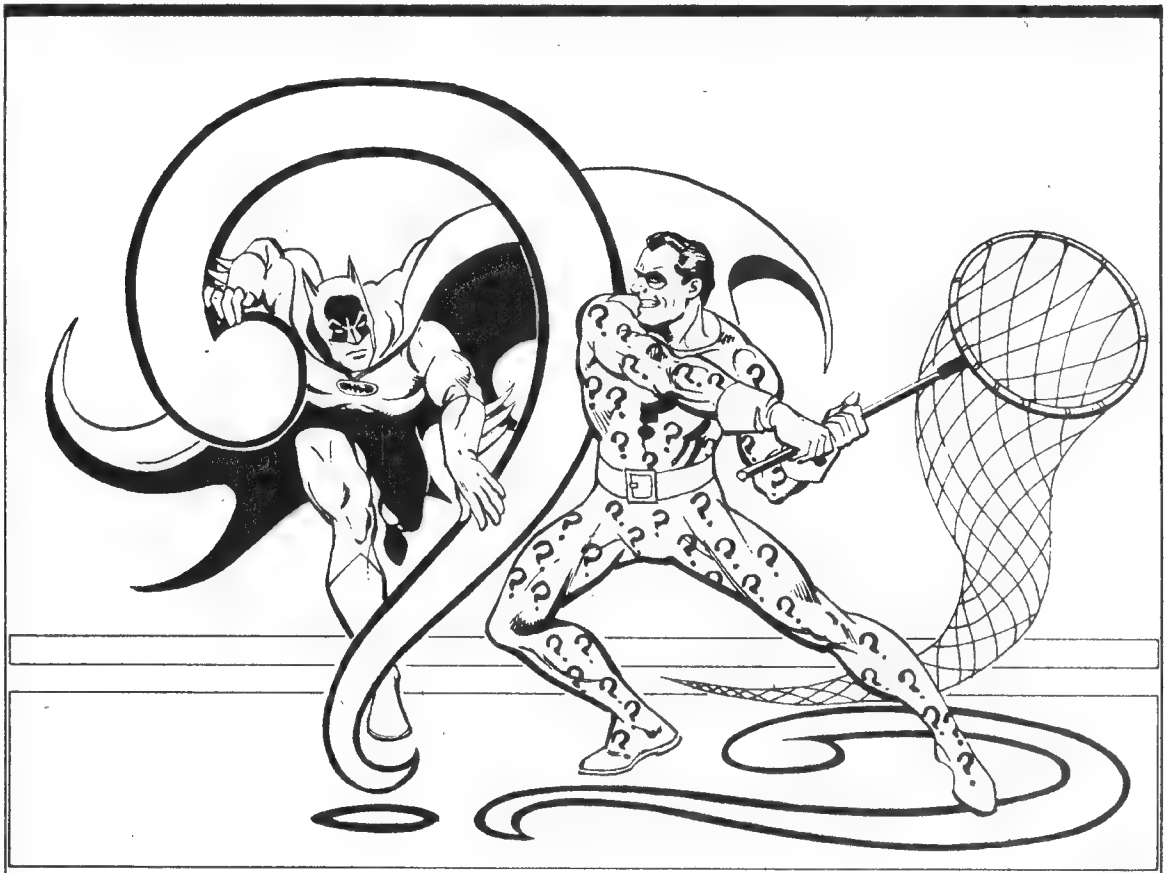
BOB LAUGHLIN
315 Clifton Street
Westfield, NJ 07090

Distributed by
ECLIPSE COMICS
PO Box 199,
Guerneville, Ca.
95446

(707) 869-9401

what is necessary to write a good comic-book story."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.



BATMAN *versus* the Riddler — an illustration from one of the manuals accompanying the DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME. All illustrations are credited to "Jerry O'Malley, Mike DeCarlo and DC Comics Staff."

the game. The primary goal of the game is to be current with DC. This means that when it is released it will be at the same point that CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS is at. We hope also to stick in enough information, without giving away the INFINITE EARTHS plotline, so that the game will still be current after issue #12. The next most important thing is the 50th anniversary. We'll probably have something like a JLA module with the original members instead of the current members, and then also have a current JLA module follow up very quickly, as part of the celebration. We'll be participating in some of the parties that DC is throwing at some of the various stores as part of their 50th anniversary celebration. Since it is a coincidence, we decided we might as well run with it, but it was not intentional.

DARREL: *You mentioned a little about cooperation... What sort of interaction has there been between Mayfair and DC?*

GREG: My main contact person at DC is **Bob Greenberger**, one of the people who is trying to pull the DC Universe back to a consistent whole. He helps me get in touch with the other writers and the other editors when I've got questions about characters, questions about where the plotlines are going, what the powers actually are. You read the comic books and the powers they had in 1975 are not the same as the powers in 1980, and not the same as in 1984. I've got to take a guess where the character actually is and what he can do. You have to put these in game terms. I try to get in touch with the authors and the editors. I was out in Las Vegas until yesterday, where I sat down with **Marv Wolfman** and we went over the TEEN TITANS piece by piece. He changed some of the numbers I had guessed at and we changed the motivation of Starfire and we went through and discussed how the characters would act in the various game situations, so that when the first TITANS module comes out it will agree with the way **Marv Wolfman** runs the TITANS. I believe we're going to be having **Todd Klein**, who is taking over OMEGA MEN, do some stuff for us on the OMEGA MEN things.

SAM: We just got the OMEGA MEN stuff.

GREG: Yeah. So we're just putting all the pieces together right now. We're trying to get **Len Wein** to help us on things like how many Green Lanterns are there going to be? *(Laughter.)*

DARREL: *I don't think anybody* really *knows how many there are...*

GREG: Yes. That's part of it — the game information *exceeds* what is necessary to write a good comic-book story. In a lot of cases DC and I and the rest of the people here at Mayfair are making this up simultaneously. I'll suggest something and DC wil say, "That sounds pretty good, but why don't you change it like this because, in a couple of months, there's going to be a civil war between these people and it's going to affect the outcome of your type of character." It's an interesting give-and-take process that is really beginning to pay off

MARVEL®

TM & © 1985 Marvel Comics Group. All rights reserved.

"No other game has a mechanics for sub-plots."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc

now. I think that the big problem with the Marvel game is that it's really hard to run Marvel-style stories with it. I think we've really been able to bring DC to the DC game.

SAM: We're also getting artwork from them for the interiors and covers. We're cooperating to a large extent through the entire production process on this.

DARREL: *Is there any difference between DC HEROES and what you might expect of a role-playing game?*

GREG: I would say the differences are in the degree to which it simulates the goings-on in the comic universe. That is, it has wrinkles in it that don't exist in other role-playing games because these wrinkles are unique to comic books. No other game has a mechanics for sub-plots. This is so the players can have the sorts of goings-on, like, if you are Donna Troy you're now married, your marriage is now a sub-plot. You have to develop and continue the relationship with the character who is your husband, without jeopardizing your career in the Titans. All the little things that go on in comic books, other than beating up villains, can now be played in the game a lot easier. The Monitor and the players all know how the storyline is developing, and you have the feeling of the flow of a story, rather than encounter followed by encounter — you know, the villain has broken into a bank, we've got to stop him here; well, now the villain has taken over the power station, we've got to stop him there. You have a feeling of a story rather than a string of encounters.

There are some minor rules, the omni gadgets and devices that explain why Green Arrow always has the appropriate arrow to defeat the villain at the last minute. There are hero points which allow you, all of a sudden for a very brief time, to get a much greater chance of performing an action, so that the great climactic battles that happen at the ends of comic books will go the way they do with the heroes defeating the villains, even though the villains have been tougher than the heroes up to this point. The powers and the ways they are balanced, which is currently our area of greatest effort, are going to try to reflect the way the powers work in DC. There is the relationship between psychic powers and physical powers and magical powers, which is different for the DC Universe than it is for Eclipse or First or Marvel, and we're trying to make sure that it works so that you can run these characters the way they are meant to be run in the DC Universe. There will be a lot more information in the DC game than there was in the Marvel game, on the universe itself — of who is where, who knows who, what the various races are. If somebody is a casual fan of DC he can quickly catch up with all the sorts of plotlines and stuff that he might want to integrate into his own game. It's mostly a difference in degree rather than a complete difference in approach.

In the DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME, this gentleman's race is described as "Exotic Humanoid."

DARREL: *When we buy this game in its master set or box set or whatever, what exactly can we expect to get?*

SAM: This is current, there might be some minor format changes: You'll get a players book which will have in it the powers, the skills, how to generate a character, how to resolve combat, and experience in how your character grows. Then you will have another 64-page book which will be the Game Master's book. The last time I checked, it's going to have a description of the DC Universe, all the nonplayer characters: Lois Lane, Jimmy Olsen, Alfred. It will also have descriptions of the various villains.

GREG: There will be equipment. There will be a S.T.A.R. Lab. There will be all the sorts of chrome that will be necessary for a Monitor to run a campaign — he won't have to make up things himself. There is going to be an intro which will be an eight-page little thing which will basically give you an outline of all the rules you need to know to start playing the game —

SAM: As a player, rather than as a Game Master. You also have a solitaire module, teaching module, to take you through after you read the intro. It will be a 16-page module, we think with Kid Flash, that will just run you through how to resolve various different things so that you will get a quick feel of how the game is played. There will be a 16-page TEEN TITANS module. We are currently expecting character cards for the JLA, Teen Titans and various villains; four-color cards essentially describing the various characteristics and their game statistics. There will be thirty of those. A set of stand-up counters. What else?

GREG: A judges screen. A bunch of character sheets so that you can generate your own characters if you don't feel like using the ones we've put in the box.

SAM: And two dice.

GREG: Let's not forget the dice!

SAM: We're having a formatting meeting in the next couple of days. There might be some minor changes, but that's what you can expect in the game.

GREG: Basically, if there are going to be

BACK ISSUE BLITZ!

If you have just discovered **AC COMICS** and would like to catch up on what you've missed, here is a list of available back issues. Some titles are in limited supply. **BLACK DIAMOND** No. 1 is $5.00; **DRAGONFLY** No. 1 is $3.00. (Only a few copies remaining.)

We also have a large selection of full-color pins depicting most of our characters.

AC BUTTONS! FULL COLOR

$1.00 each or 3 for $2.00

POSTAGE: 1 - 4 Buttons - $1.00
5 or more - $1.50

AC Characters are available on full-color 2½ inch pin back buttons. We have:

BLACK DIAMOND	**ASTRON**
COLT	**SENTINELS OF JUSTICE**
THE SHADE	**SPACE ARK**
NIGHTVEIL	**SCARLET SCORPIONS**
CAPTAIN PARAGON	**SILVER (FAZE ONE)**
DRAGONFLY	**STARDUST**
CAPTAIN FREEDOM	**BLACK BLAZE**
TARA	**MS. VICTORY**
BOLT	**BLUE BULLETEER**
COMMANDO D	**THE LATIGO KID**
STARFORCE SIX	**FIRE BEAM**
STARMASTERS	

AC COMICS BACK ISSUES

Color Comics

$1.75 each or 3 for $4.50
CAPTAIN PARAGON 1, 2, 3
BLACK DIAMOND 3, 4, 5
AMERICOMICS 4, 5, 6
STARMASTERS 1
FEMFORCE 1, 2,
NIGHTVEIL 2
SENTINELS OF JUSTICE 1

$2.00 each or 3 for $5.00
BLACK DIAMOND 2
CAPTAIN PARAGON 4
AMERICOMICS 1, 2, 3
FUN COMICS 4 (1st CAPTAIN PARAGON)
MS. VICTORY SPECIAL
NIGHTVEIL 1

B&W Comics

$2.00 each or 3 for $4.50
FEMFORCE SPECIAL 1
BOLT SPECIAL 1
STARFORCE SIX SPECIAL 1
POWER PLAYS 1

B&W Magazines

8½x11
$3.00 each or all 3 for $5.00
FUN COMICS 2 (COMMAND D)
FUN COMICS 3 (CAPT. PARAGON and NIGHTVEIL)
STAR FEMS 2 (BLACK BLAZE)

Postage 1 Book = 65¢
3 or more = 85¢

Order Books & Buttons from

PARAGON PUBLICATIONS
BOX 1216
LONGWOOD, FL 32750

"We've really been able to bring DC to the DC game."

any changes things are going to be added rather than subtracted.

SAM: Right. Instead of two books of 64 pages, we might have three 64-page books, because Greg is writing a lot of stuff. *(Laughter.)*

GREG: Hey, the DC Universe is a *big* place.

DARREL: *The role-playing craze started in the late Seventies as a DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS craze. DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS rapidly developed into an incredibly complicated system and you have to have book upon book...*

SAM: And lots of charts.

DARREL: *Yeah. Do you think that this tendency to propagate these systems has created a situation detrimental to fantasy gaming, in that people marginally interested in gaming are frightened off by the sheer enormity of it?*

GREG: Yes, I do. This is one of the reasons DC HEROES is going to develop along the lines that it is. You can play it at several levels. You can play it at the stage where all you need to know is the number that you have to roll on the dice. If you get more into it you can read the rules, figure out exactly how your powers are working and exactly what would be the optimum strategy. To get more into it you can read the Monitor's book and find out how all the nonplayer characters and aliens and so on are working. But I wanted a system where I could sit down with somebody and, if I knew the rules, within five minutes have them playing.

SAM: We essentially have got two charts that resolve everything.

GREG: So the basic problem ws getting two charts that would cover all of the varieties of actions that you can do in DC. We finally managed to come up with two that work...

SAM: Version #108. *(Laughter.)*

GREG: Right. So we're pleased with that and I was actually also pleased with the reactions of the retailers in Las Vegas that I got a chance to sit down with and run short demos. A lot of them had expressed the exact problem — that you have this large section of rules which not only are big but have their own lexicon. It's intimidating. I was running them through the Teen Titans intro scenario, and they were playing it within five or six minutes and they seemed to like it. I think we're on target, that it's simple enough that people who are novices can get into the game pretty quickly, and it's rich enough and detailed enough that the gamer who has been playing for several years will find something of interest in it, it won't just seem like a CHUTES AND LADDERS style of game.

We did that by layering on the information that you need to know to go to the next level of complexity. But you never *need* to move from level one if you don't want to. So, I think yes, there is a problem with the proliferation of rules systems and the increase in complexity and I'm hoping that we're stepping backwards from that with DC.

DARREL: *I'm kinda glad to hear that because I've always... I've taken a look at fantasy gaming and I've never really been able to get into it because it always seemed to me that to really get involved you have to devote all of your time to it...*

SAM: There is a certain truth to that. If you were going to write your own modules, run your own adventures, there's a certain amount of time that you've got to put into it, but it's not an awful lot.

GREG: But I think there's also a big difference between somebody who's going to be, at the one extreme, a Game Master who wants to create his entirely unique universe which only exists for himself, with all the nuances and things it takes thousands of hours putting together, and on the other extreme, the player who just wants to play the game. My problem was getting those two some middle ground. I think that we've finally managed to hit upon a system that will take as many variables and as much information as the players and monitors want to put into it. But for the gamer who just wants to sit down for 90 minutes on a Saturday afternoon and play something, he can sit there and do it — he does not have to go through a six-hour debriefing process and then six hours of play to feel he's gotten his time back out.

SAM: We have sprung DC HEROES on people who have never played role-playing games before; my wife for one; the pastor of my church and his wife. We talked to them for five minutes and off they went and had a great time, wanted to play it the next weekend. The game itself was as complicated as any fantasy game, but the players themselves didn't have to deal with a lot of the minute little details like "Oh, I've got a strength of 97, and dividing by 72, because the wall is six feet high..." They don't have to do that.

DARREL: *After the initial fad and the media amusement of D&D wore off there were some charges that role-playing games were unhealthy, psychologically and socially*

Superman bashing Brainiac. In the game, Superman has fifty points for strength, versus Brainiac's fifteen.

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

HEY LOOK!

THE ICE-MEN ARE HERE.

© Bernard Mireault

5 issue limited series

MACKENZIE QUEEN

MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIES

NO.2 ON SALE SOON.

"Sub-plots can now be played in a super-hero game."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

The Teen Titans' have their own solitaire module, called "Titans' Challenge."

detrimental and addictive, that they consumed large amounts of time when some of that time probably should have been spent working or studying or sleeping or whatever. How do you respond to those charges?

GREG: I think, again, it's a problem of degree. Yes, I remember being in college and seeing folks who would play D&D for 25 hours a week and last one quarter. I think there was a problem that was partly related, as you were saying, to the degree of complexity. If you sit there and spend 45 or 50 hours getting yourself acquainted with the rules you will want a payback on that. You are going to want to spend a lot of time with the game because you already have this initial investment that's rather large. It becomes more than a game to you. If I spend 45 hours on a project, then it starts becoming important to me almost regardless of its intrinsic value. Emotionally it's easier to distance yourself if you have a system which doesn't require you to go through this initiation period with these four huge books which are ordered in peculiar ways and you have to learn this mass of rules before you can first roll the dice.

The other thing is that the topic makes a huge difference. The DC Universe is a lot more cleancut than the typical D&D fantasy universe. The heroes represent values which are generally considered good. There are some on the fringe which are not — you can deal with Vigilante in a module. But it's not as murky as a system where even the best hero in the realm advances by plundering and killing. That's my major objection to DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS. The first thing I rewrote when I was a Game Master was an experience system which forced you to go out and commit deeds which are generally considered evil in order to advance your character to promote a just cause — it seemed sort of odd to me. The experience system in DC is, "if you act in the manner of a hero you get hero points which make you a better character." The emphasis is more on the heroic image and the heroic deeds in comic books. If you kill guys, you basically lose your hero points. It's a different framework. The morality is less murky.

SAM: On the complaint that kids are spending too much time playing these role playing games, you have similar complaints about television and videogames. If I had to choose between my kid sitting down and watching television or spending the same amount of time playing a role-playing game, I'd much rather have him playing a role-playing game, primarily because it's interactive. You are interacting with five other people, four other people. You are developing social skills of cooperating with the other guys on your team. You are also exercising a tremendous amount of imagination. We call role playing-games quantified interactive storytelling. You don't have boards. I've played these games just flipping coins to see if I've succeeded or not. What you've got is one person telling you a story and you are imagining yourself in that situation. Or you are sitting down and developing a world of your own, writing a story, and that's a very creative thing. I think that's a very positive aspect of role- playing games. People are interacting with each other, rather than interacting with a screen, and they are also exercising their own imagination and using their own creativity. Like Greg said, there's a matter of degree. I've known people who do nothing but role playing games and they've fallen in too much. But then again, I've known kids who started role playing and they began developing into very mature, responsible adults.

GREG: And then there's us. *(Laughter.)*

DARREL: *Our society has a tendency to regard fantasy and fantasy-related material as frivolous, perhaps even perverted. People who occupy themselves with fantasy tend to be regarded as abnormal and people who make their occupations of fantasy as lucky-dogs or exploiters. Have you ever encountered this?*

GREG: Oh yeah.

SAM: My pastor's mother thinks that D&D is the Devil's tool. I mentioned that my pastor played the DC game with me, and he found nothing wrong with it. He had a grand ol' time. I've got no problems with somebody who sincerely believes that a role-playing game is something his child should not do. That's fine. He can go ahead and have his child not do it. But there are a lot of other people who believe that they are good recreational activities and their views should be respected, too.

GREG: I *do* have an objection to people who consider fantasy, itself, bad. They have a view of what reality should be and feel that you must adhere to this reality. A lot of the things that I find pretty fascinating about this world are at least temporarily disconnected from reality. In mathematics — when you get into higher mathematics it's awfully hard to find a connection with anything that has to do with the real world. It's strictly an art form. Eventually, it pays off and you find out that number theory does indeed have something to do with nuclear

The Black Canary.

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

"People who read comics have the chance to see

physics and isn't that wonderful. If you limit yourself to thinking about exactly what is in front of you, in exactly the form it is in front of you, then nothing new is ever going to happen. That seems like an awfully gray world to me. If they want to live in a gray world, that's fine. I don't choose to, getting out of the comic books.

DARREL: *In a recent letter to COMICS COLLECTOR magazine, Jack Herman, co-author of the VILLAINS AND VIGILANTES game, wrote that super-hero games have a basic difference from fantasy games — super-heroes who kill and break the law must suffer the consequences of their actions. "Players who wish only to 'hack and slash' won't find the super-hero games giving in to these indulgences. It is part of the basic laws of the super-hero genre that you are either good or* evil."

GREG: Definitely. We agree.

SAM: It's in the game. It is the game.

GREG: Yes. You can be Batman, who is questionable at times. His motivation is to seek justice and if he sees laws as obstructing justice he will bend them. But there really is a dividing line between what is good and what is evil. If we're going to simulte the DC Universe then we're going to have to simulate the morality found in that universe. It's certainly true in the DC comics that there are a narrow range of characters that are in the middle. These are people that, if you'd see them on the street, you'd definitely dive for cover. The majority are people that you'd run up to get an autograph from. There are those that you're supposed to admire and those that you're supposed to fear. I think it's got to go into the game that good guys are good guys and the bad guys aren't. A hack'n'slasher will take a look at DC and think some of the mechanics are kind of neat but "golly-gee-whiz, I'm not allowed to assassinate people for fun and profit."

SAM: Right. You can't slip the neutron bomb into the villain's headquarters and take out the villain and Ma and Pa Kent's store down the road.

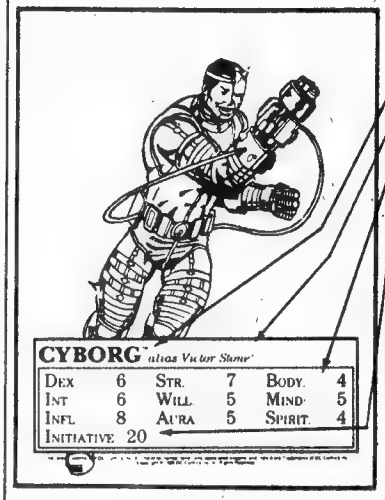
GREG: I think hack'n'slashers are in general more disappointed with the super-hero games than anybody else is. I'm pretty sure they'll be disappointed with DC HEROES, but that's a segment of the market I don't particularly care about. I don't care about appealing to them, anyway.

DARREL: *Yes, well... I see a problem with Herman's letter. On one hand Jack is implying that there may be something wrong in the fantasy games because they perpetuate this ongoing indiscriminate slaughter. You would seem to be in agreement with that. On the other hand, though, he is equating the super-hero games with a perception by which comics have long been criticized and which some of them have been trying to move away from, that of the one-dimensional characters. Are these games going to be one-dimensional?*

GREG: No! It isn't one-dimensional simply because you have to make a decision between good or evil. Just because we say good or evil is binary, it's one or zero, doesn't mean that we can't say, "you also have a certain tendency of things you like about people — you are a loner or you are a socialite — you are somebody who admires his own individual accomplishments versus somebody who would much rather stand in the background," There are a lot of factors of motivation, of background, of the way your character works that can be built into it without ever upsetting the balance of "this character is good." I have no problem with saying that Batman is a good character and that Starfire is a good character, but I don't think they are at all similar in their motivation or background or approach. Yet they're both good.

SAM: Greg mentioned that we are going to be using something called sub-plots. Essentially, you'll have the main adventure, but

Character Cards



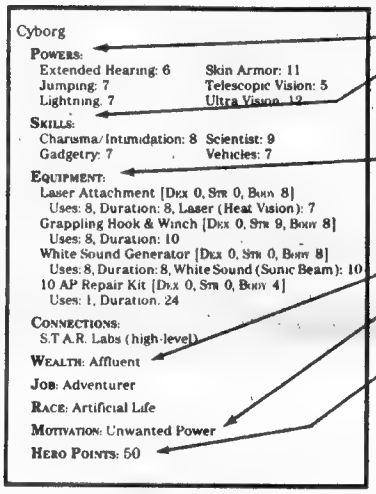
FRONT:

Name

Alias
A character's secret identity

Attributes

Initiative.
The relative ability of a character to act and react.
A number in parenthesis is used as Initiative when the Super-Hero character is using his Martial Artist/Attack Advantage Subskill.
A number in brackets is used as Initiative when using his Superspeed Power.



BACK:

Powers

Skills
An "L" next to a Power or Skill signifies that the Power or Skill is linked to an Attribute.

Equipment

Vulnerabilities

Limitations

Weaknesses

Wealth

Motivations

Hero Points
This statistic is not fixed, but changes as you spend and gain Hero Points during adventures. This number is just the average number this hero will have at any one time.

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

how it feels to act in the role of a superhero."

© 1983 DC Comics, inc

WONDER GIRL *alias Donna Troy*

DEX:	8	STR:	11	BODY:	7
INT:	8	WILL:	4	MIND:	5
INFL:	5	AURA:	3	SPIRIT:	3
INITIATIVE:	21 (29)				

STARFIRE *alias Koriand'r*

DEX:	7	STR:	6	BODY:	7
INT:	5	WILL:	6	MIND:	9
INFL:	8	AURA:	5	SPIRIT:	6
INITIATIVE:	20 (30)				

NIGHTWING *alias Dick Grayson*

DEX:	7	STR:	3	BODY:	6
INT:	7	WILL:	6	MIND:	7
INFL:	8	AURA:	6	SPIRIT:	5
INITIATIVE:	22 (29)				

Character cards from the DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME. Each card lists such characteristics as dexterity, intelligence, and strength; the back of each card gives further information, as the character's equipment, connections and job (in Wonder Girl's case, lasso and bracers; Paradise Island; and photographer).

the individual players can go to the Monitor before the adventure starts and say they want to run sub-plots. For example, he says, "I've got to get back to Ferris labs to stop the Demo Team from destroying the place." The Monitor says, "Fine. You've got to try to work that into the story. You've got to try to get back there by time X." Then you have the exact same thing that happened to Green Arrow.

GREG: Green Lantern.

SAM: Right. The green people bother me. *(Laughter.)* Anyway, same thing that happened with Green Lantern in the comic. Your mission is 40 lightyears away and you have to get back in time to save Ferris Labs. All of your personal problems can blow up on you. You'll be able to do this in the DC game. What you *won't* be able to do are some of the more bloodthirsty activities — killing the guard that you happened to capture just because you don't want him to talk.

GREG: The reason I think you can have some depth is because of this. I had a lot of fun running a test session which was essentially TALES OF THE TEEN TITANS #50, the wedding of Donna Troy. There's no combat or anything, you're just role playing the characters. The people were interested in seeing the outcome of the wedding because the wedding issue hadn't been put out yet. They were running the characters and were running the game exclusively on subplots. I guess the thing that I really object to is when you say if you're a good guy you can't have depth, that for some reason the only way to give a character depth is to make him evil.

SAM: That is not right.

DARREL: *I'm glad to hear you say that. Now that role-playing games are no longer in the general news media — the current rage is trivia games — to an outside observer it might seem that role-playing games are a dying breed. Is the role playing sub-culture in any danger of disappearing?*

GREG: I think that the role playing subculture is pretty healthy. It did have that initial surge of fans who went out and bought the games. But one of the more, to me, interesting ways of looking at the market is how many modules are selling of a game that has been out. In the case of D&D it started off being fairly close — for every game you sold you tended to sell a module. As D&D went through the fan stage the difference separated. I would pose it that a lot of people bought the games because they heard about it and it sounded life a nifty idea. Then they opened up the books and discovered, "Oh my gosh, this is as much fun as getting through final exams," so they put the boxes away. But those people who have been buying the modules and been reading THE DRAGON are still there, and you're still getting new ones.

SAM: TSR's making a print run of 50,000 on every single module they put out, probably more.

DARREL: *That's more than a lot of the direct-sales-only comics print.*

SAM: Right. And the market is viable. if the market wasn't viable we wouldn't be going into this. We're wonderful, neat, great people, but I'm also the comptroller of this company and I'm not going to go and throw away the investment money to bring out DC HEROES if the market is dying. I'd be putting out more trivia games.

DARREL: *Did your interest in doing a DC HEROES game develop from an interest in comics or from an interest in role-playing games?*

SAM: Mine is an interest in role playing. I started role playing back in '75, just about when DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS first started to hit the scene. I always enjoyed it but, like Greg, I had some problems with the let's-go-out-and-see-how-many-people-we-can-kill-today aspect. We came to the

"It was nice to try putting the comics' feeling

conclusion here at Mayfair that there was a need for a good, fairly clean super-hero role-playing game. We've all read comics since the Fifties, some of us are that old, and enjoyed the DC Universe, so we went to DC and asked if we could do this. They said sure and we went crazy.

GREG: In my case, I would say it's... I got presented with the game when it was half-way done and decided that this was going to be a lot of work. The incentive was the comic books.

SAM: And telling your wife that buying the comic books was a business expense!

GREG: It's a business expense, hey! *(Laughter.)* I found that I still enjoyed comic books. The comic books have really been what has sustained me through a lot of the mechanical failures of the game. I find that they have, certain ones more than others, quite a bit of imagination, quite a bit of excitement in them that I'd forgotten existed when I decided that I had to grow up. It was just fun again. it was nice to be trying to put that sort of feeling of wonder and excitement back into a game, but I was deriving it from the comic books. I was trying to put back into the game what I felt I was getting out of the comic books.

DARREL: *I've got one more question. I realize that you'll probably be somewhat biased on this one: How good a game is DC HEROES?*

GREG: Okay. I'll take it from a design standpoint. The system I had worked on previously, which I still feel pretty good about, was the JAMES BOND 007 ROLE PLAYING SYSTEM. What I like about JAMES BOND, what excited me about working on it, was the fact that it had a universe mechanic which hooked into all the skills and all the abilities so that once somebody understood how you rolled the dice this one way, you could play the game. The problem with the JAMES BOND mechanic was that it was totally unsuitable for people who were much better than slightly human. Above James Bond it just plain doesn't work.

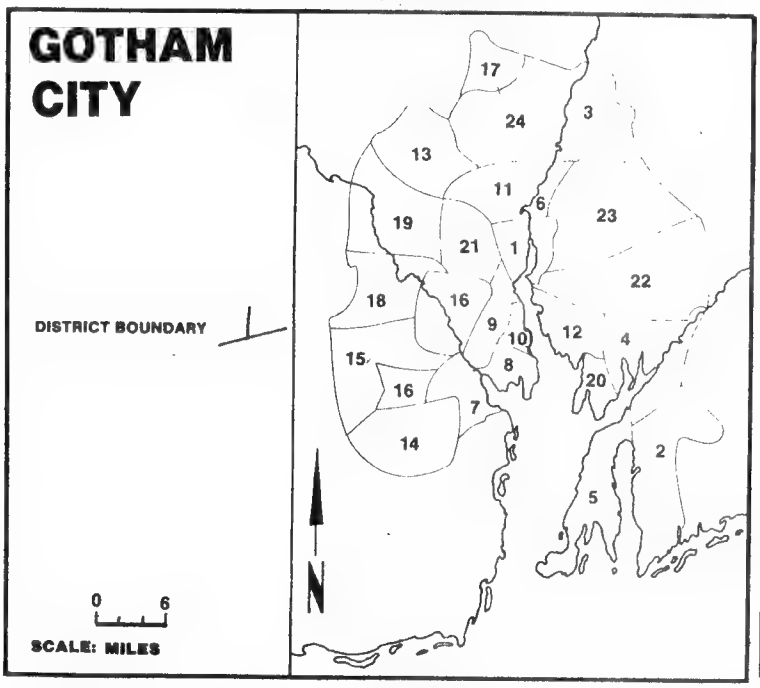
My mission was to find a mechanic which could do the same thing, which could hook into the incredible variety of powers and skills and situations that occur in DC, without it having to be exception 2B or exception 10D. Instead of 30 pages of rules just to handle the psychic powers, because psychic powers run differently than physical powers, I finally have the tables which say everything works this way — so once you understand that you roll the dice, you look at the table, you find the next total and that's the result and you do this for every operation in the game — you're on your way. That got me a little bit excited because it allowed me to run super-hero games for people who hadn't played them before.

The way we are simulating some of the special gadgets are nice. I am most excited personally about the sub-plots and the fact that now there is a reason to have all these trends and parental relationships and relationships between characters within the groups; the dynamics, the personal dynamics. You get rewarded for these things in game terms. You didn't really get that in CHAMPIONS or MARVEL SUPER-HEROES, the reward of running these little sideshows. I think the sub-plots mechanic makes it easier for a person to get out of the game the same sort of feeling that you get when watching Carole Ferris chew out Hal Jordon or watching ... well, that hasn't happened yet so...

SAM: Let's not reveal the outcome of INFINITE EARTHS!

GREG: *(Laughter.)* ...watching some stuff happening. That excites me. I'm not saying that it's going to be the most different, the most exciting, the 41st generation of role-playing games. We've just taken some of the concepts I like and have cleaned them up. Sub-plots have been introduced, which has not been in role-playing games before, so that you emphasize the storytelling rather than the rules. For a medium where you're trying to simulate comics or stories, *that* should be an important feature. I'm personally happy with it. It's going to do the job it's supposed to do — which is let you have fun playing super-heroes.

From the Gamemaster's Manual: A map of Gotham City. Numbered neighborhoods include The Bowery (12), where Bruce Wayne's parents were killed, and Bristol (5) where Wayne Manor is.



© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

# of wonder and excitement back into a game."

In the DC HEROES game, Hawkman gets a "9" for intelligence. His motivation: "Upholds Good."

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc.

BRIAN REID says...

As with comic books the creation or development of a role-playing game is a group effort. This applies in the general sense to the company producing the game and those individuals who work behind the scenes within that company, and in the specific sense to the group that concentrates its efforts on the actual creative process. As with comics, this latter group consists of writers, artists and editors.

Brian Reid, aonther member of the DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME development team, was scheduled to participate in this interview but missed it due to his surprise involvement in a real-life adventure. In a separate conversation with Darrel, Brian had this to add about his involvement with DC HEROES:

I came on the team in August. Since then I've worked on the operative schematics of the dice-rolling section and on the world section, which explains how the skills, powers, activities, points and so on apply to the world of the game.

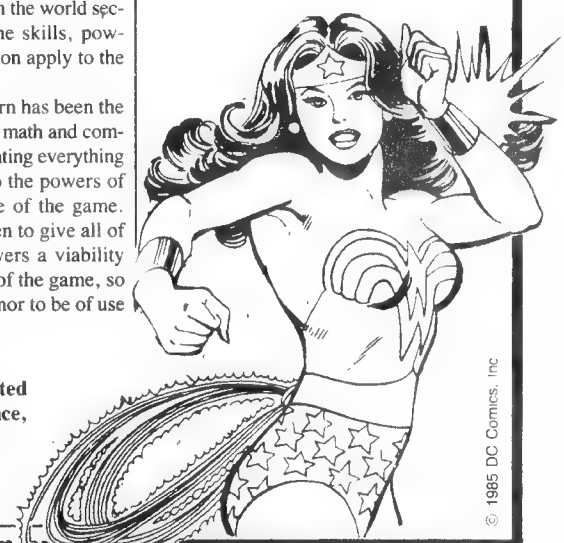
My main effort and concern has been the powers section, directing my math and computer skills towards incorporating everything from the skills of Batman to the powers of Superman into the structure of the game. Our objective in this has been to give all of the skills, abilities and powers a viability within the overall structure of the game, so that none of them are too minor to be of use to any player, or too potent to fit equitably into the game.

This has been a tricky proposition because the last thing we wanted to do was alter the characters in any way. I think we've been successful in simulating the characters and that folks will for the most part be quite pleased with the game.

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Brian Reid
Born: 29 November 1958 — Johnson, Scotland
Current Residence: Chicago, IL
Occupation: Student
Training: Brian is a student at the University of Illinois-Chicago, majoring in Mathematics and Computer Science. He is working for Mayfair part time while in school and is helping with the development of the DC HEROES game.

He is active in role playing (D&D) games at school, where he met Cory Glaberson, Mayfair Games' Editor in Chief, and thus began working on the DC project.



Wonder Woman is rated a "10" (for intelligence, that is) in the DC HEROES game.

© 1985 DC Comics, Inc

"People can see real life issues with heroes.

JOSH & LARRY JONES

Kids and parents, traditionally, have often been at odds over comic books. Like the penny dreadfuls and dime-novels before them, comics are frequently seen by concerned Moms and Dads as overly violent, mind-rotting, character-warping sub-literature seducing their innocent and impressionable offspring.

Larry and Joshua Jones break with that tradition. Comics is an interest that brings this father (Larry) and son (Joshua) closer together. And they not only read comics, they collaborate on producing them! After a home-made lunch of tofu and veggies (prepared and served by Larry), we gathered around the dinner table, and discussed the nascent "Jones Family Comics" empire, and why a Christian pacifist such as Larry likes and lets his son read the adventures of that pagan Hyborian Age hell-raiser, Conan the Barbarian...

BILL CHADWICK: *I first met you, Joshua, in the laundromat reading CONAN, which you named as your favorite comic — as did Larry, your father. Was CONAN the first comic you ever got interested in?*
JOSH JONES: I'm not sure. I think so. I started liking CONAN and then I started liking the X-MEN. Then I switched back to CONAN.

BILL: *What did you like about X-MEN?*

JOSH: Wolverine. He's my favorite.

BILL: *He's your favorite comic-book hero? Favorite super-hero?*
JOSH: Well, he's my favorite of the X-Men.
BILL: *Were you, Larry, a comic-book fan before Joshua was? Did you introduce him to comic books?*
LARRY JONES: I had been out of touch with them for years. Joshua started getting interested in them, I started reading comics to see what was going on, and I got interested again. When I was his age, or younger, I started out with CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED — the comics conversions of classic novels.
BILL: *Yeah, yeah!*
LARRY: And I had the first FANTASTIC FOUR — which I think I would kill for today. *(Laughter.)*
BILL: *Oh, sure.*
LARRY: When I started getting back to enjoying comics, I went to find FANTASTIC FOUR comics and couldn't find The Thing. I haven't seen any FANTASTIC FOUR on the shelves here and, of course, we just shop at the grocery store here rather than a comic-book outlet.
BILL: *Well, I gather from talking to you, that before I mentioned it, you were not aware of direct sales — that there are stores now that deal only in comic books?*
LARRY: No. In the Sixties, I used to read WONDER WART-HOG. *(Laughter.)* That, to me, is a different thing — kind of like a humor magazine. Then as Joshua started reading — of course, one of the first things kids like to do is look at the pictures and all, so he started looking at comic books, and started buying them — I'd get some for him.
BILL: *Joshua, how many years ago did you get interested in CONAN and X-MEN?*
JOSH: Three or four.
LARRY: We're sporadic readers because

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Joshua Jones
Born: 6 December 1973 — Boulder, Colorado
Occupation: Student
Favorite Comic Book: CONAN
Favorite Movie: THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY
Favorite President: Abraham Lincoln
Favorite TV Show: VOLTRON

I like a dose of reality with my fantasy."

we don't go out and buy each and every issue of the comic books. Since we weren't aware of these direct-sales places, we've missed issues, and we just have to scratch our heads and wonder what happened — from issue to issue in X-MEN and CONAN.

BILL: *Do you prefer sword-and-sorcery stuff over super-heroes?*

JOSH: I don't like the SUPERMAN stuff much.

BILL: *By "the SUPERMAN stuff," do you mean the DC comics or super-hero stuff in general?*

JOSH: Well, like Superman and Batman and all those — the first super-heroes — I don't like them that much anymore, as much as some of the other characters.

BILL: *Like the X-Men?*

JOSH: Yeah.

BILL: *Why do you like those characters better than Superman and Batman, the original super-heroes?*

JOSH: I guess 'cause they got kinda old. You can see them on TV, but X-MEN you don't see them on TV. They're really good.

BILL: *Larry, you remember the old X-MEN, when they wore blue-and-yellow uniforms, before Wolverine?*

LARRY: Right.

BILL: *Looking back on the old X-MEN, do you think they've improved with age? Do you like this new group better than the old group?*

LARRY: It seems to me that the readership must be the same as when I was a kid — guys thirty years old, or so. It seems a lot more intellectual than it did in my younger years, maybe because I see more in what they're writing now. I'm not sure. But I liked that back then, and I like this now. I'm a fan of X-MEN and CONAN because I believe that mutants are more believable than swords and sorcery. And Conan is just the best of the tough guys. He's the guy at the construction site that everyone marvels at, for busting two-by-fours with his hand — that kind of thing. Conan, to me, is more of a real person, even though he goes into all these bizarre situations and meets up with supernatural creatures, there's just something about him being a normal human, rather than a super-hero...

BILL: *More real, say, than a guy being bitten by a radioactive spider and getting the powers of a spider?*

LARRY: Yeah.

BILL: *What's happening in comics now that you really like, that makes you think, "I wish they would put out more comics like that?"*

JOSH: Well, they're making more sense than I guess they used to. They used to have The Joker — now they have The Beyonder and stuff like that.

LARRY: The things that are coming up that deal with real-life issues — Iron Man's having trouble with alcohol, that kind of thing, where people can really see real-life issues with heroes. I like a dose of reality with my fantasy.

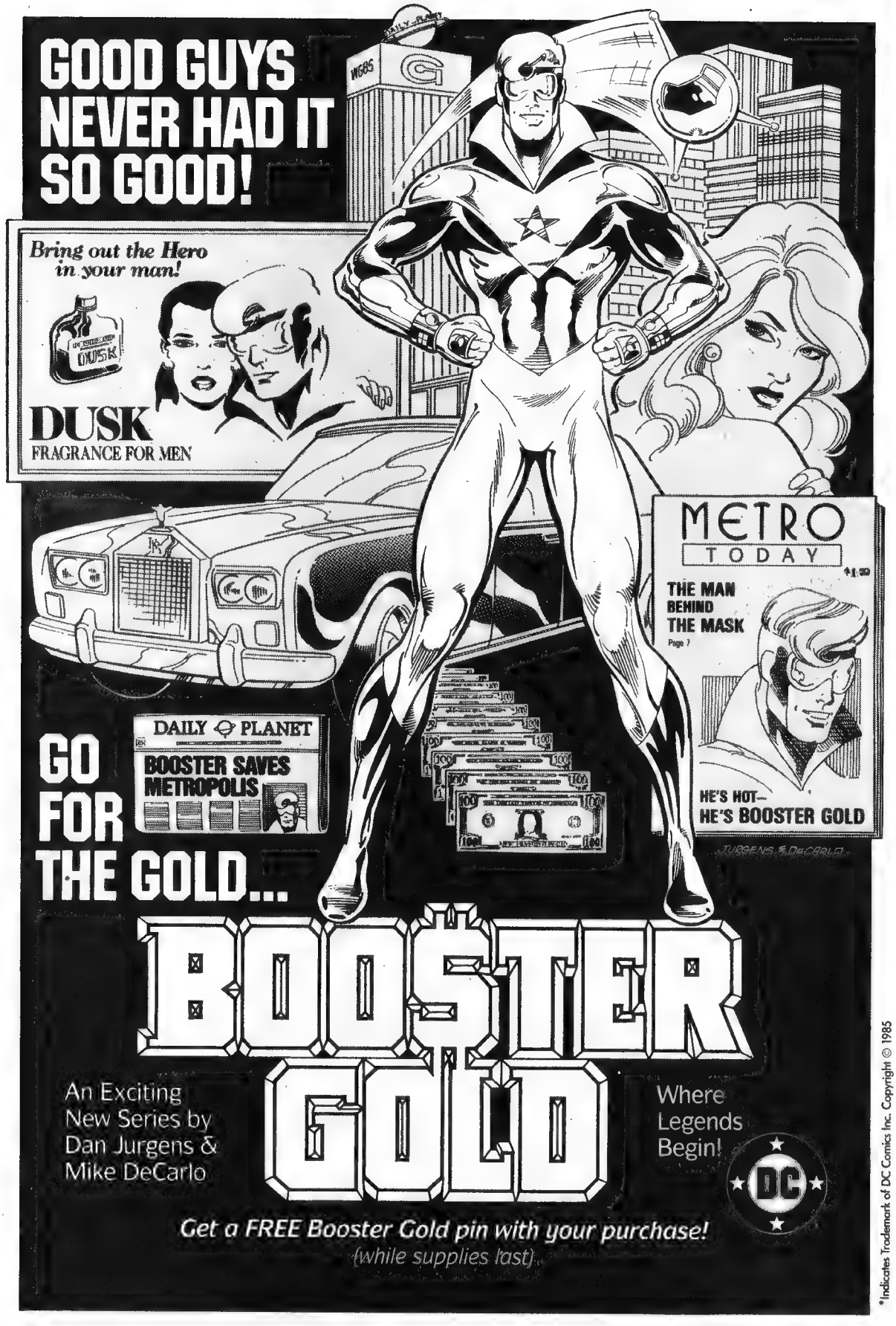
BILL: *Anything in comics happening that either of you don't like?*

JOSH: I don't usually like toy comics.

LARRY: I don't like a lot of the Darkseid kind of stuff — you know, on television we glorify people like J. R. Ewing and in comics we have people like Doctor Doom glorified. Comics have always used classical themes and themes from the Bible. It bothers me how things are sometimes warped to get that little extra excitement.

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Larry Jones
Born: 8 November 1952 — Munich, Germany.
Occupation: Factory worker.
Residence: Decatur, GA
Favorite Comic Book: CONAN
Favorite Movie: LITTLE BIG MAN
Favorite President: Thomas Jefferson
Pet Peeve: Yuppies.


GOOD GUYS NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD!
Bring out the Hero in your man!
DUSK
FRAGRANCE FOR MEN
METRO TODAY
THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK
HE'S HOT— HE'S BOOSTER GOLD
DAILY PLANET
BOOSTER SAVES METROPOLIS
GO FOR THE GOLD...
BOOSTER GOLD
An Exciting New Series by Dan Jurgens & Mike DeCarlo
Where Legends Begin!
Get a FREE Booster Gold pin with your purchase!
(while supplies last)
*Indicates Trademark of DC Comics Inc. Copyright © 1985

"I like the Bible and I like the classics."

I like the Bible and I like the classics. I noticed that KING CONAN looks a lot like King Arthur. His wife falls in love with someone who looks like Sir Lancelot and has a name like Lancelot and, you know, to me that's not creative. That's relying on something that worked before and trying to... "Let's draw it now. It was a book and it was a fable, let's draw it now, it might work." I don't like that.

BILL: *Do either of you like comic strips?*

LARRY: I *love* comic strips. That's what I buy the newspaper for, to check out DOONESBURY and Snoopy and...

JOSH: GARFIELD.

BILL: *Larry, Josh is probably too young to remember this, but you remember a time when they used to have adventure-strips in the newspapers. Now, I think DICK TRACY may be the last one. But they used to have PRINCE VALIANT, STEVE CANYON, TERRY AND THE PIRATES...*

LARRY: PRINCE VALIANT was the biggie for me. I could really get into PRINCE VALIANT and go out and get a trash-can lid and a stick and fight off Vikings. I like the humor strips, but I *loved* to read PRINCE VALIANT regularly. It was always a good strip.

BILL: *Well, for just a hundred bucks a shot you can now buy reprint volumes.* (Laughter.) *Do you ever see any non-humor strips that you like?*

JOSH: Well, in Alabama, they had RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT.

BILL: *Oh, is that still around?*

JOSH: Yeah, and they had THE PHANTOM.

BILL: *The last paper I saw it in was, I think, the Greenville, South Carolina, paper that sometimes comes over the border.*

LARRY: We're cosmopolitan here in Atlanta. *(Laughter.)*

BILL: *You mentioned to me before that you were putting out your own family comic book?*

LARRY: I had kicked around that idea for a long time. Joshua was excited by it. We did some things just to kind of show each other what we would want out of comic books. Joshua came up with some storylines, and he wanted to do the settings so that he could do the stories in the setting. I came up with a map. We're working on it now — a future world after a nuclear holocaust, where much of the world is in a barbarian state, but there's pockets of higher technology.

BILL: *Well, I noticed that Florida is missing on your map.*

LARRY: What's happened is that the nuclear holocaust is a hundred and fifty years from now. The holocaust has melted the polar ice-cap and shifted the poles so the North Pole is out in the Atlantic just to the east of Greenland now so the Arctic Ocean is not frozen. The holocaust has caused problems out in California where the San Andreas Fault has opened up and flooded the valley there. There are underwater cities that developed in the hundred and fifty years since then. And there are little remnants of technology — it's very complex. I've got the whole scenario worked out and I'm going to let Joshua come up with the stories and dialogue.

I more or less traced some maps. We've got a big Rand McNally map book here somewhere. At church there are a lot of people who are into anti-nuclear movements, and we have gotten information about, "What would happen — what are the possibilities — if most of the nuclear arsenal was exploded within a short period of time? What of the possible consequences? It's really wide open as to the future, if that kind of thing happens. And if you put the holocaust one hundred and fifty years from now, you've got a lot of technology to develop up to that point — a tremendous plunge backwards when it happens.

BILL: *So you've got your whole Jones Family Comics Universe right there.*

LARRY: Right.

BILL: *In the credits, Josh is plotter and scripter, and you're artist and co-plotter?*

LARRY: Such as it is! *(Laughter.)*

BILL: *So what happens in this nuclear setting?*

LARRY: Well, we haven't worked out the details, but there are characters that are basically alter-egos of the family, with them having some characteristics that we possess and some that we obviously don't. It has a Christian theme. I'm very involved with the church and, of course, the boy's names are Biblical — Elijah and Joshua. We use a cross between the characters and their attributes in this future destroyed world. The idea is that there's a community that has a powerful faith, and has banded together, and Christians have no place in a barbarous world because they're prey to everyone. And the characters in the comic book are defenders of these people.

BILL: *You were showing me the props you used to construct to draw this comic. What is this vise-like mechanism?*

LARRY: It's a drill press, without the stand, and some of the pieces turned around —

BILL: *They don't come with those penny rolls attached, do they?* (Laughter.)

LARRY: No.

BILL: *Actually, it's quarter rolls, looks like. He's attached a quarter roll to each end of the cylinder of the drill press so it looks like a silencer to me. Probably it's the muzzle of a gun. But you build these things so that you, the artist, will have visual reference when you're drawing?*

LARRY: Right. I'm better at coming up with something and once I've traced it, then I can draw it. I traced that... *(holds up picture)* ...I like to have something to look at, then come up with an idea — this is my "O" Stick.

BILL: *What is it made out of — oak?*

LARRY: It's a vine. It's incredibly strong, and you can throw rocks with it. You can scare the heck out of people with it and, in one little strip, this character, Ishmael Magog, fells a bear with this stick. He sticks a rock in the "O" and he hits the bear with it, and then jumps the bear while the bear is stunned.

BILL: *Larry has just shown me the "O" stick. The stick is a vine — it's not the kind Tarzan swings on — it's fairly solidified, and it has this loop on the end. It looks a little like Yoda's Gimer stick. It has a loop on the end, which you could use to put rocks in and throw them.*

LARRY: You know what an *atlatl* is? It's like an extension of your arm. When you throw a spear like this *(makes a motion like he is hurling a javelin)*, the energy ends when you let go of it. An *atlatl* is like an extra stick, and you stick the spear into the loop, and it's like having an extra-long arm, and it throws it harder.

BILL: *Like the things they used to have in MAD magazines — axotls, or whatever it was?*

LARRY: It's Australian — Australian aborigines use them. Bushmen do, too.

BILL: *So this is not a shoestring operation here. You're building your own props. Have you produced any pages yet?*

LARRY: No, we've just been playing around with it. It's really for our enjoyment more than anything else. I did some pages awhile back when we were having fun with it. The boys live on King's Highway, and we call it the King's Highway Funnies. I drew pictures of Joshua and Elijah slaying these beasts. In this, Joshua's a giant.

BILL: *It looks like they're fighting Pac-Man.* (Laughter.)

LARRY: Yeah. There they are with a giant spider. But this isn't what we're doing now. We're just playing around with some adventure kind of things. In the series that I'm trying to get together with Joshua now, we've got three basic separate groups who represent my youngest son, Joshua and I, and Ishmael Magog, the primitive. When he fights, he never uses anything but primitive weapons. He's more of a primitive person. And then Josh Jones is in the comic strip. He has this gun. Oh, the story of the gun is that a hundred and fifty years from now, there's a lot of decadence, and out-

"It's bizarre for a pacifist: CONAN's my favorite."

pouring of wealth. Mardi Gras has beome a nationwide thing. Have you ever been to Mardi Gras?

BILL: *No.*

LARRY: They throw trinkets out, they throw little toys out, moon pies and all sorts of stuff. And they spends hundreds of thousands of dollars building floats. And the Mardi Gras gun was set up to shoot quarters, and it would shoot a roll of quarters out so that people would run and pick up the quarters.

BILL: *Oh, so that's why the quarter rolls are at the end of it.*

LARRY: Right — so when the nuclear destruction happens, the Mardi Gras gun is converted by the forefathers of Joshua to be a defensive weapon. Instead of shooting coins out for people to pick up, it shoots them out to knock people down. You can fire a single burst of one coin, or you can fire a whole roll of coins, depending on what you're shooting at.

BILL: *When I was growing up, some parents let their kids read comic books, others didn't. They thought they were a bad influence. No problem in this home, apparently. Does the violence in comics ever bother you?*

LARRY: Oh, yeah. But when I was young, I killed hundreds and thousands of people on paper — drew raging battles and had armies roaring through. And managed to come out of it a pacifist. I know that it sounds a little bizarre to say that CONAN is my favorite comic book. But I think you have to recognize that violence does exist. I would stand as a pacifist, and would like my son to be a pacifist, but I also think he should be able to take care of himself if people ever attack him.

BILL: *Well, when I first met you, Josh, you were reading SAVAGE SWORD, which is even more violent than the regular CONAN comic. You, Larry, have no problems with that?*

LARRY: Well, we talk about it. Sometimes I'll say to Josh, "Well, you know, perhaps it'd have been better if Conan had handled it this way." I don't think there's anything wrong with the violence in comic books, if it's counter-weighted with discussions of what you should do to avoid violence. I think it's like a catharsis. It was to me, anyway. I was always a very calm person, and I worked out any violence I had on paper.

BILL: *Joshua, what artist to you like best?*

JOSH: Ernie Chan.

BILL: *How about you, Larry? Do you have any favorite writers or artists?*

LARRY: I'm pretty ignorant as to the people who produce the comics.

BILL: *Is there any subject I haven't brought up that you'd like to discuss?*

LARRY: I would like to see comics — and maybe they've already done this — but because the stories in the Bible are so vivid and there are such fantastic things happening in them, I'm surprised there aren't Bible comic books. The stories would be perfect. There's plenty of violence in the Bible, the Old Testament particularly. There's plenty of the things people look for in comics in the Bible that I'm surprised people haven't capitalized on.

BILL: *Well, there was a big deluxe comic book called STORIES FROM THE BIBLE, which was only a one-shot. They only got up to, I think, Noah and the Ark. What about you, Josh? Is there something you'd like to see in comic books?*

JOSH: I don't like it when there's something fantastic on the cover, and you open up the comic, and nothing like that happens inside.

BILL: *Well, they call it "symbolism." Does that happen in CONAN regularly?*

LARRY: It happens in all the comics.

BILL: *Well, if you're listening, Marvel, stop doing that.*

AMAZING SECRETS
of Low Cost Comic Collecting
REVEALED — FREE

Send for our Free Sales List

HARTI COLLECTORS COMICS
24134 S. Ridge Rd. Dept.CI
Beavercreek, Oregon 97004

HARTI ™
COLLECTORS COMICS

LAST WORD

Comics Interview 234 Fifth Ave. Suite 301 New York, NY 10001

RICH BEYOND MONEY

Hello David!

Thanks very much for the copies of #22 and #23. What a surprise and delight to see yet another photo of me from the old days. . .I'd forgotten about it. It was a good reason to call **David Kaler** — we had a fine old chat — been a long time since we'd been in touch. That was such a dear letter from **Bill Chadwick**, and I even got to see that Stan has sent me his "best." I am rich beyond jewels and money! Well, now I know where he is these days.

I loved **Cat Yronwode**'s interview. I know her a little bit — we've met over the years — she is certainly a great interviewee. The section on modern art is wonderful. I dearly loved "Goddamn nonobjectivists, may they rot in hell!!!!" I am a bit more wishy-washy in my opinions, as I'm often told.

Hope all ok with you and your summer is a good one. We have a drought. I am trying to be a good citizen, but how much Diet Pepsi can one drink??!!

Don't forget lunch or whatever when you get up this way.

Flo Steinberg
Arts Magazine
23 East 26th St.
New York, NY 10010

A BIT OF AN INSULT

Howdy, David and Company. . .

Though I've been happily sitting in the peanut gallery, silently savoring your magazine since its debut. I find it necessary to dash off a letter concerning *amigo* **Tom Yeates**' interview in #22. Enjoyed it and the entire issue (especally **Ramsey Campbell**'s interview!) a great deal, but I must correct Tom on one point in particular.

I can understand Tom's ambivalence about the function of graphic violence as a "dramatic tool" in general and **Steve Perry**'s use of it in particular, but I find it difficult to swallow complete dismissal of **Steve Perry**'s work as a writer. Both Tom and Steve are close friends of mine, and I always wish them the best of life and success; I hope my speaking out in print doesn't piss either of them off too much. Knowing them both, and knowing the behind-the-scenes troubled history of the TIMESPIRITS series, I can perhaps see where Tom's statements are coming from. . . a perspective the casual COMICS INTERVIEW readers cannot possibly bring to a reading of Tom's interview. However, I cannot allow the statement that Steve is "a comic-book dealer, and he wants to write comics" to stand as a truth. It's simply not so!

While Tom and I were still high school students (1970), Steve had his first piece of fiction published in a small literary magazine. While Tom was gong to Utah State University doing his fine rock'n'roll illos for the fanzines, and I was pumping gas in Colbyville, Vermont, Steve was seeing his fiction (written as a student at Johnson State College in Johnson, Vt.) published in local literary 'zines, and his ambitious science fiction plays (MUTIES and SPINDLEWHEEL) performed for the public on the stage of the Dibden Auditorium in Johnson. By the time I met Steve in '74 or early'75, he had written two novels, twelve plays, at least fifteen short stories, and was sending comic scripts to the Marvel Bullpen in hopes of breaking in to the industry. The man is a writer, Tom, and was at it long before you and I had even begun our pro comic work.

A number of Steve's ideas for comic stories and series (including the characters of TIMESPIRITS) date back to the early 1970's, when Steve first seriously applied himself to making his living as a writer. Steve's first published comic writing (aside from our self-published underground title, ABYSS, in '76) came in '80 and '81 with work I had drawn for HEAVY METAL and EPIC. From there, Steve went on to freelance under editor **Denny O'Neil** at Marvel for BIZARRE ADVENTURES (including the completion of two fine stories **Rick Veitch** drew that remain unpublished since BIZARRE ADVENTURES' interminable "suspension") and a number of unpublished inventory scripts for the likes of G.I. JOE and POWER MAN AND IRON FIST. Of late, he's gone on to write episodes of the upcoming **Rankin & Bass** primetime animation series THUNDERCATS and SILVERHAWKS.

As I say, the man is a writer. Judgment of his work is up to the indivual, and Tom certainly has the right to voice his own opinion, but to casually dismiss him in print as he did is a bit of an insult, unintentional or not. Steve did work as an employee of Moondance Comics from 1981-'84, a case of a writer working as a comic dealer to bring home the weekly bacon (a necessity all freelancers, whether artists or writers, should be able to relate to) but by no stretch of the imagination is Steve just "a comic-book dealer" aspiring to write comics.

And with that said, why don't you come out East and pay us a visit, Tom? I've got these GREAT horror movies I can show you on the VCR. Hell, some of 'em didn't even make it to the theatres (heh heh, heh). . .

Stephen R. Bissette
Late-As-Usual
Mountains of Madness, Vermont

Tom Yeates

SHOOTER SHOULDN'T BE SQUEAMISH

Dear DAK,

Enjoyed COMICS INTERVIEW immensely. Every issue is interesting for me because I'm interested in who the people are who make up the comics industry and the issue had several people I'm especially fond of.

Yes, Marvel, when will you publish FRED HEMBECK DESTROYS THE MARVEL UNIVERSE? I wonder why it has been so long delayed when they've had it sitting on the shelf for several months now. I know it's in production because I saw the cover artwork hanging up on **Ron Zalme**'s office wall during my halcyon visit to the Marvel offices. They didn't know when it would see the light of day either, and that was at the end of June.

You don't suppose **Hembeck**'s style of biting satire has found slight disfavor among the head honchos do you? Perhaps they're just afraid of it what such a calamitorus train of thought would do to all the eager young acolytes out here in Marvel-Land. C'mon guys, laughs are hard enough to come by in comics these days. I for one hope **Jim Shooter** and company relent and not be squeamish at someone as deft as **Hembeck** when they take a poke at the hand that feeds them.

TIMESPIRITS has been one of my favorite series since issue one. I naturally thought artist **Tom Yeates** and writer **Steve Perry** must get along swimmingly to produce this very interesting comic. According to **Tom Yeates** though, such is definitely not the case. I shall be very disappointed if he decides to leave this strip as his artwork looks so brilliantly professional throughout. An extremely revealing and honest interview from one of the rising young stars in the business who is not afraid to speak out.

Since I am also a devotee of horroe fiction I welcomed the talk with **Ramsey Campbell**. I've read several of his short stories in various anthologies. Unfortunately his first novel I chose to read was a real dud called OBSESSION (it's referred to as THE REST OF THEIR LIVES in the interview). I thought the four principle characters and the people around them were completely manufactured, leading dull, desolate, drab, little lives, rattling off unbelievably stagy dialogue, and most crucially there's no significant supernatural angle to be fleshed out at all. There's no feeling of horror, or terror at work in this book that could justifiably put in the *genre*.

Anyway, I hope to see you interview some other modern practitioneers of this art like **James Herbert, V. C. Andrews, C. L. Grant** and editors **Kirby McCauley** and **T. E. D. Klun**. The editor over at Arklam House would also be a good subject.

Gary Kimber
80 Searle Ave. Downsview, Ontario

KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!

David,

I'd like to congratulate you on your interview with Mr. **Ramsey Campbell**. I find it very informative and entertaining. Horror is my favorite *genre* and since Mr. **Campbell** appeared in COMICS INTERVIEW, why not have **Stephen King** in a future issue? I'm sure he has plenty to say on behalf of his movies. **Bernie Wrightson** would be another fascinating person to have. Have **Wrightson** talk about CREEPSHOW, the FRANKENSTEIN novel, and any future work he might be doing. I'd love to see more of his artwork. Keep up the great work!

Joe Oliveira
40 Tremont St.
Peabody, MA 01960

VIOLENT, PROMISCUOUS AND ANTI-CATHOLIC

Dear DAK & Co.,

Thanks for yet another fascinating issue of CI. The **Fred Hembeck** interview was most enlightening — and sad. I know a lot of people besides Yours Truly, who were looking forward to his "destruction" of the Marvel Universe. I'm glad Fred isn't so dis-

DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT'S

COMICS INTERVIEW

Interviews are always the most interesting feature of any comics magazine — you probably flip to them first, yourself. Now! At last! A high-quality monthly magazine that interviews today's top talents, yesterday's legendary greats, and all the other people involved in every aspect of comics!

FICTIONEER BOOKS, LTD.
Suite 301
234 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y., 10001

☐ Please start my subscription to *COMICS INTERVIEW* with #_____.
$24 for 12 issues. (Foreign: $30 for 12)

NAME_____
ADDRESS_____
CITY_____
STATE_____ ZIP_____

- A FUN-FILLED, INFORMAL MAGAZINE ABOUT THE COMICS FIELD!
- INTERVIEWS *WITH* THE PROS, *BY* THE PROS!
- THE KIND OF BEHIND-THE-SCENES EXCLUSIVES ONLY AN *INDUSTRY INSIDER* CAN BRING YOU!

SUBSCRIBE & SAVE!

couraged that he's decided to become an accountant or something. We *NEED* guys like him to remind us not to take all those costumed weirdos too seriously. As for his comment that comics need "More sex. Less violence. And lots of jokes," all I can say is: "Go for it, Fred! And for God's sake, sell your next project to someone else so **Shooter** can see what a mistake he made!"

On a related subject, I've been following the discussion of censorship in the pages of this mag with both interest and trepidation. Myself, I hate the idea that anyone, ANYWHERE is telling someone that they can or cannot read certain books. Three or so years ago, when I first got interested in the alternative/independent comics, I had a terrific subscription service that plugged a lot of quality stuff from **Saba, Chaykin, Grell, Starlin,** etc. I was sixteen, but thankfully, when I sent for the comics that interested me, no one said: "We can't sell you this because **Saba** took a swipe at the Catholic church and **Grell** is too violent and **Chaykin**'s women are too promiscuous, etc. etc...." As long as I sent money, they sent comics. Maybe from the viewpoint of someone who wants to "protect minors from pornography," (or whatever phrase the pro-censorship crowd is using this week), it's a bad method, but I was lucky enough to get some great reading out of it. I'd hate to think that other people might be prevented from doing so, if the censors ever make their actions match their words.

I'd also like to thank you for interviewing so many of the people who's work I've been following as of late. (**Saba, McCloud, Wagner,** etc.). I'd still like to see you speak with **Collins, Beatty,** and **Kato,** however. It's damned annoying that they broke the ice for female detectives in comics, and that there are now a slew of people falling over each other doing female detectives (such as **Thomas** and **Giordano**'s JONNI THUNDER), which like most copies are pretty inferior to the original. What's worse, these imitators don't even give credit where it's due!

Thanks for your kind attention, and keep the quality comin'

Amy Sacks
Somewhere On Earth

Nice hearing from you again Amy...and on topics other than Barry Dutter and the She-Hulk, to boot! Hope you enjoyed the interview with Max Collins and Terry Beatty in issue #24!

IS SOME CENSORSHIP DESIRABLE?

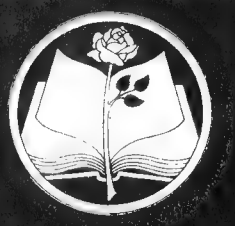
Dear David,

With respect to my letter that was printed in #22, I'm afraid that you continue to misinterpret some of my statements.

FREE • ILLUSTRATED

BUD PLANT CATALOG

Packed With Over 2500 New, Out-Of-Print & SALE Items



GRAPHIC NOVELS
LIMITED EDITIONS
SPECIALTY MAGAZINES
SIGNED PRINTS
POSTERS
BACK ISSUE ALTERNATIVE COMICS

CALL TOLL FREE NOW!
800-824-8532
(Calif, Alaska, HI (916) 273-9586)

BUD PLANT, INC.
• P.O. Box 1886 •
Grass Valley, CA 95945

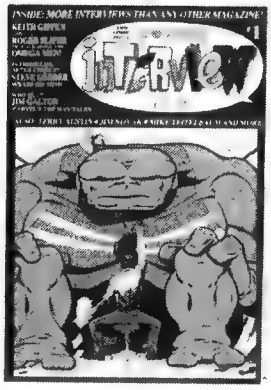
The point I was trying to make (or, at least, the point that you have, I think, misread) was that *some* censorship is desirable. (Thus, the title you put on my letter, "Censorship Is Desirable," did not fairly represent the contents of my letter. In the first part, I think I indicated that the context in which the argument takes place here in Canada is somewhat different than it is in the US and that I didn't necessarily approve of all that was going on. Only near the end did I try to justify two instances of censorship. Thus, at most, you might have titled my letter "Some Censorship Is Desirable.")

The key statements in my letter were as follows. "I think there are situations in which censorship is desirable. For instance — do you believe we should allow 'snuff' films and child pornography?" So, let me ask you now, David, *do* you believe that "snuff" films and child pornography should be allowed? If you do, then you have a far broader interpretation of what constitutes justified freedom of expression than I do. Since these two things are victimizing other people in severe ways, I think that freedom of expression must give way to the rights of the individual to life and dignity. If you don't believe that we should allow these two things, then you are in favour of restricting freedom of expression (whether or not it was actually accomplished through censorship laws or through other criminal laws doesn't matter in this context). That is the essence of my argument: That in *extreme* cases some restriction of individual freedom is necessary and desirable. (Another example: Forcing me to drive on the right side of the road and to stop at a red light is a restriction of my freedom of choice, but do you advocate that these laws be abolished?)

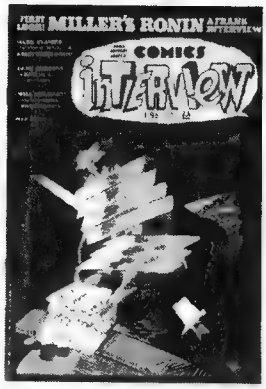
In your reply, you say that my argument is "another variation on the misguided notion that the way to prevent drunken driving is to outlaw alcohol." This is an unjustifiable inference on your part, David. My whole point was that in certain *limited* cases, (cases in which others are victimized severely), action is necessary. Your example concerns the *total* banning of all alcohol, *regardless* of the effect it is having on the person who isn't drinking. I fail to see the correlation between the two arguments. I could just as easily say that your argument concerning the freedom of the press can be extended to say that slander and libel should be legal and that it should not be possible to copyright written material — since these things restrict freedom of expression. Most any argument will look ludicrous when extended to extremes — which does not invalidate the argument when it is properly applied. (Which is exactly my point with censorship. It is not desirable in general, but in extreme cases it is!)

You close your reply by saying "In short, T.M., shutting down the newspapers is not the way to prevent bad news." Again, I feel this comment is uncalled for. Where did I ever *hint* that I believed such a ludicrous idea?! The two examples I cited were ones

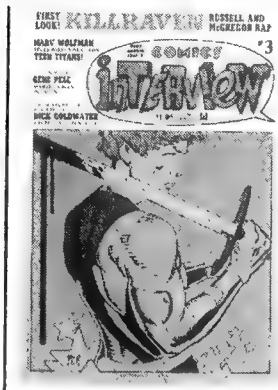
Order any 2 for $5 — or any 5 for $10.



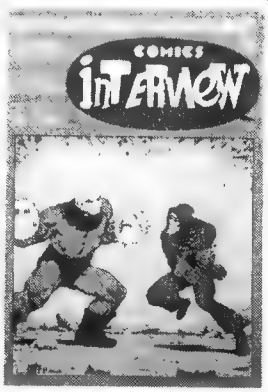
#1-$3.00 **Keith Giffen** on the making of THE OMEGA MEN — **Steve Gerber** speaks out on comics — X-MEN inker **Terry Austin** talks — Marvel's top man, **Jim Galton,** tells all — and much more in this premiere issue!



#2-$3.00 **Miller** raps about RONIN — **Mark Evanier** shares secrets of **Kirby's** NEW GODS — **Steve Gerber** asks **Will Meugniot** about DNAGENTS — **Gene Simmons** of KISS on comics — more! Cover by **Frank Miller.**

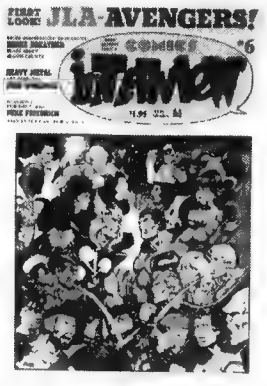


#3-$3.00 **Don McGregor** & **Craig Russell** on KILLRAVEN — Origins of NEW TEEN TITANS told by **Marv Wolfman** — **Howard Chaykin** on AMERICAN FLAGG — French comics by **Neal Adams** — Cover by **Russell.**

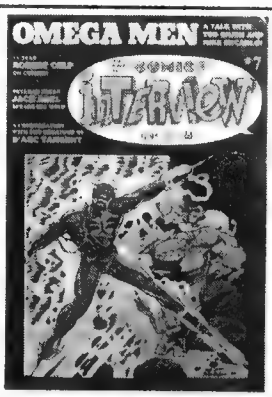


#4-$3.00 **Starlin** speaks about WARLOCK, CAPTAIN MARVEL & DREADSTAR — **DC's Dick Giordano**, part 1 — from **Foster** to **Frazetta**, the last **Roy G. Krenkel** interview — Cover by **Starlin.**

#5-$3.00 **Wendy & Richard Pini** — inside ELFQUEST, part 1 — **Stan Lee**, straight from the shoulder — DC's **Dick Giordano** part 2 — Origins of COMICO. Cover by **Wendy Pini.**

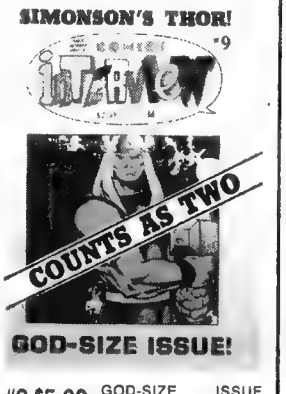


#6-$3.00 **George Perez** & **Roy Thomas** tell all about JLA/AVENGERS feud — inside ELFQUEST, part 2 — **Berke Breathed** blabs about BLOOM COUNTY — more! Awesome cover by **Perez!**

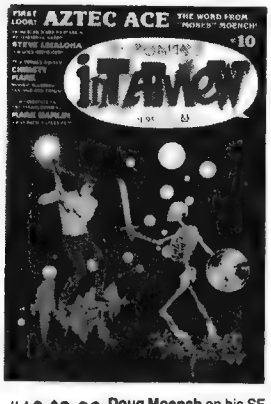


#7-$3.00 **Artist Tod Smith** — inker **Mike DeCarlo**, too — D'ARC TANGENT — TV star **Robert Culp** talks about comics — Marvel artist **Jack Abel** OMEGA MEN cover by **Smith & DeCarlo!**

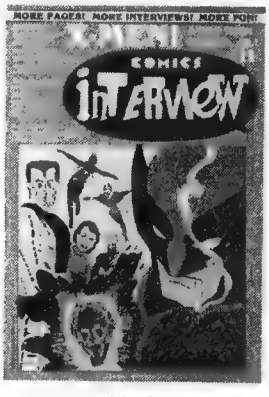
#8-$3.00 **Mike Baron** and **Steve Grant** discuss NEXUS, WHISPER and BADGER — **Bill Griffith** talks about ZIPPY THE PINHEAD — **Richard Burton** on British comics — plus more! Cover by **Steve Rude.**



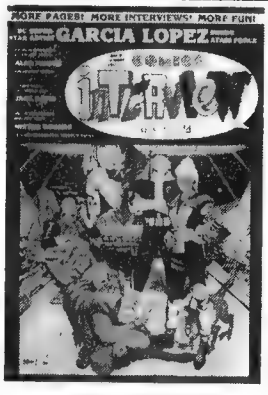
#9-$5.00 GOD-SIZE ISSUE **Walt Simonson**, the man and his art — grand master **Joe Kubert** gabs — A walk down memory lane with comics giant **Gardner Fox** — much, much more!! THOR cover by **Simonson.**



#10-$3.00 **Doug Moench** on his SF series — from **Starlin** to STAR WARS, a wacky interview with **Steve Leialoha** — **Christy Marx** on women, sex and RED SONJA — more! ACE cover by **Hernandez & Yeates.**



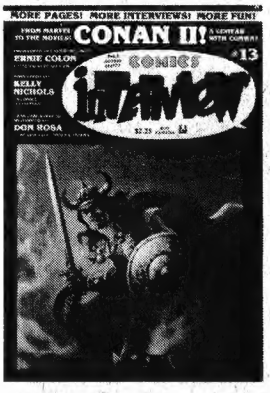
#11-$3.00 **John Romita, Jr.** talks about Marvel from IRON MAN to X-MEN — **Doug Moench** (part two) on his stormy career and the state of comics — inside Pacific Comics — more! X-MEN cover by **Romita!**



#12-$3.00 DC artist **Jose Luis Garcia Lopez** (TEEN TITANS, ATARI FORCE) — EC artist **Jack Davis** — TV's **Mr. Rogers** — star scripter **Alan Moore** talks about superheroes — **Louise Simonson** — more!

Send to: Fictioneer Books Ltd. 234 Fifth Avenue Suite 301 New York 10001

Order any 2 for $5 — or any 5 for $10.

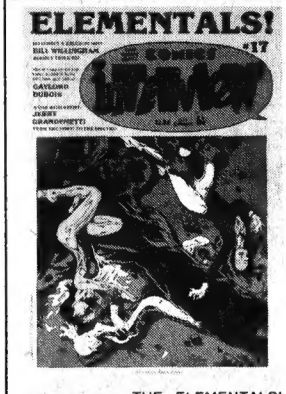


#13-$3.00 **Gerry Conway & Roy Thomas** sound off on scripting movies (Conan, Fire & Ice) and comics — a two-fisted talk with outspoken artist **Ernie Colon** — porn star **Kelly Nichols** — **Don Rosa** — more!

#14-$3.00 **Jim Shooter** talks about SECRET WARS! **Gary Groth** of COMICS JOURNAL! Scripter **Steve Englehart** sounds off on SILVER SURFER and other surprises! SECRET WARS cover by **Mike Zeck!**

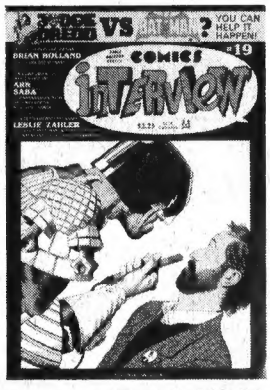
#15-$3.00 Co-creators **John Ostrander & Tim Truman** on GRIMJACK! VOID INDIGO artist **Val Mayerik! Richard Pini & Colleen Doran** on A DISTANT SOIL! Great cover by **Truman!**

#16-$3.00 THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES! Writer — and DC Vice President — **Paul Levitz**, and artist **Dan Jurgens** — DOOM PATROL creator & original X-MEN writer **Arnold Drake** rattles skeletons at DC!

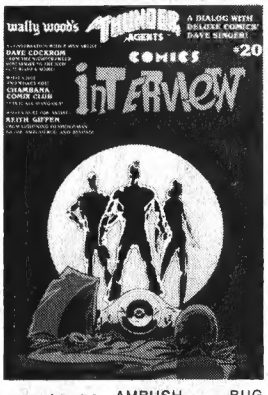


#17-$3.00 THE ELEMENTALS! Creator **Bill Willingham** talks about this super-group! **Jerry Grandenetti** his years with **Will Eisner!** — Golden Age great **Gaylord DuBois.** Cover by **Bill Willingham**

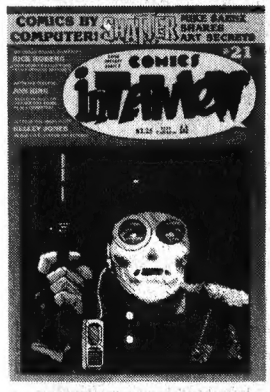
#18-$3.00 ZOT! writer/artist **Scott McCloud!** A rap with original CAPTAIN MARVEL writer & Golden Age great **Rod Reed** — HEAVY METAL artist **Arthur Suydam** — Marvel's **Carol Kalish!**



#19-$3.00 British artist **Brian Bolland** breaks the silence about the secret BATMAN VERSUS JUDGE DREDD project he and **Alan Moore** have been working on! COMIC BUYERS GUIDE's **Don & Maggie**



#20-$3.00 AMBUSH BUG alumnus **Keith Giffen** and X-MEN artist **Dave Cockrum** — publisher **Dave Singer** about the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS — news of the NIGHTCRAWLER mini-series



#21-$3.00 SHATTER was created completely on computer — artist **Michael Saenz** tells how you can do computer comics! **Kelley Jones** — on Marvel's MICRONAUTS! **Rick Hoberg** about drawing THE BATMAN!

#22-$3.00 Marvel Destroys the **Fred Hembeck** Universe. . . er. . . something like that — Marvel artist **Tom Yeates** talks about TIMESPIRITS — and celebrated British writer **Ramsey Campbell** on comics!

#23-$3.00 The MYTH-ADVENTURES of fan favorite **Phil Foglio!** Artist **Neil Vokes** of Comico's ROBOTECH/MACROSS — inside story of Japanese comics, American style. Plus a conversation with **Cat Yronwode!**

#24-$3.00 **Sal Buscema** breaks his long silence to talk all about the early days at Marvel — Writer **Max Collins** and artist **Terry Beatty** talk about MS. TREE! DC's **Karen Berger** on SWAMP THING. **T. M. Maple**, too.

Send to: Fictioneer Books Ltd. 234 Fifth Avenue Suite 301 New York 10001

GULACY & McGREGOR

A shotgun blast of fiery, explosive fiction by DON McGREGOR — featuring **Dragonflame,** a savage ghetto guerilla dealing out brutal justice to those beyond the reach of the law! Trade paperback with 7 sensational b & w PAUL GULACY illustrations.

$7.00
plus $1.00 postage

P. CRAIG RUSSELL

Five science fiction and fantasy stories by JACK LONDON. Clothbound hardcover with 5 b & w interior illustrations and full-color fold-out drawing, plus title and contents page designs, many interior designs,experimental end paper art and color dustjacket design by **Killraven** and **Elric** artist P. CRAIG RUSSELL.

$8.50
plus $1.00 postage

FICTIONEER BOOKS, LTD.
Suite 301 234 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10001

in which the very *process* of "expressing oneself" (by making a snuff film or forcing children to engage in pornographic acts) was criminally unacceptable and thus the greater good would be in restricting that "expression". Your statement refers to either a flawed notion of cause and effect or a desire to ignore reality, neither attitude of which did I advocate in my letter.

I found the interview with **Fred Hembeck** to be very interesting — only now you've got me wanting to see a comic book that may never appear! I was also glad to see the photos of Fred. After all these years of seeing the cartoon version of him, it's nice to see what he really looks like. (Gosh, don't you just *hate* it when people are so secretive?!) However, I think I know *why* he keeps himself out of the public eye. After examining those pictures, I can now release the true story to an unsuspecting public: **Fred Hembeck** is **Dave Sim**! Think about it? I mean, have you ever seen the two of them together? (Aha!) (And I'll just bet that if you tried to cut Fred's hair, the scissors would break!)

Finally, I was glad to hear the true story on VOID INDIGO from **David Darrigo** (My lack of the inside story of this should finally scotch those persistent rumours that I am professionally involved in the comics industry! If I was, I wouldn't have embarassed myself by giving only part of the story. Of course, I guess I could just be playing it deviously and acting dumb. (And the first one to say I don't have to *act* dumb is going to...um...Well, they're not very nice to have said it.)

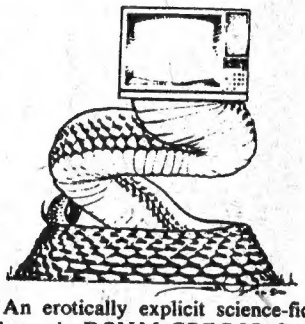
"T.M. Maple"
Box 1272
Station B
Weston, ONT
M9L2R9

Alas, T.M. — you missed the point entirely. My closing comment that shutting down the newspapers is not the way to stop bad news specifically applied to (and answered) the questions you have again raised. And, whether you realize it or not — that is exactly the position you are arguing.

This is the point: Reporting bad news is not the same as causing *bad news. Filming a killer is not to be mistaken for committing murder — these actions are not the same thing, or network field reporters would be in serious trouble. In the event of a snuff film, the crime committed is the act of* murder *— for which there are already laws on the books —* not *the act of filming. There is no need to specifically outlaw "snuff"* films *when* murder itself *is already against the law.*

— DAK

SIMONSON & McGREGOR



An erotically explicit science-fiction odyssey by DON McGREGOR. Starring one of the most remarkable heroines in SF. **Killraven** was *never* like this! Bonus: a back-up feature on **DETECTIVES, INC.** With artwork by MARSHALL ROGERS. Trade paperback with full-color cover painting by WALT SIMONSON.

$10.00
postpaid

TIM KIRK

15 witty and whimsical fantasies by L. FRANK BAUM, author of the wonderful **Wizard of Oz** stories. Clothbound hardcover with b & w illustrations and dust jacket drawing by Hugo-Award winning SF artist TIM KIRK.

$8.50
plus $1.00 postage

FICTIONEER BOOKS, LTD.
Suite 301 234 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10001

NEXT: TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES creators PETER LAIRD & KEVIN EASTMAN tell all -- and more! -- including what's on the agenda for those amazing amphibians. Would you believe -- Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles...SECRET WARS? Plus: Part 2 of STAN DRAKE's incredible interview -

Coming your way in COMICS INTERVIEW 27...

GEPPI'S COMIC WORLD

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE
1720-C Belmont Ave.
Baltimore, Md. 21207
(301) 281-1144

VISA _____

MASTER CARD _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

APT.# _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____

WORK PHONE _____

I UNDERSTAND THAT MY SUBSCRIPTION BEGINS WITH THE NEXT AVAILABLE ISSUE OF EACH TITLE THAT I HAVE SELECTED.

_____
(Signature)

_____
(Parent's Signature, if under 18)

BACK-ISSUE CATALOG AVAILABLE-OVER 2 MILLION BOOKS IN STOCK. WATCH FOR OUR FALL 1985 CATALOG UPDATE.

HOW TO ORDER

1 - Put in, next to each title you want to receive, the number of copies you want to receive.(This will now be your standing order) 2 - Count the total number of books and put that number in the box below. 3 - Now see what plan that number of books fits into and check off that plan. 4 - If you are under Plan A, B or C, then return this entire form with the correct amount of deposit for the plan you are under to :GEPPI'S SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE. If you have enough books for Plan D, and you choose that plan, then just send the order form to us and we will inform you of the amount you need to send us in order to become prepaid. NOTE : Changes in your order will be made ONLY upon written notification.

TOTAL NUMBER BOOKS [ ]

PLAN "A" - 15 to 39 BOOKS
$10.00 DEPOSIT
SHIPPED MONTHLY
10% DISCOUNT
FREE PLASTIC BAG FOR EACH COMIC
YOU PAY SHIPPING CHARGES

PLAN "B" - 40 to 69 BOOKS
$20.00 DEPOSIT
SHIPPED TWICE A MONTH
10% DISCOUNT
FREE PLASTIC BAG FOR EACH COMIC
YOU PAY SHIPPING CHARGES

PLAN "C" - 70 OR MORE BOOKS
$30.00 DEPOSIT
SHIPPED WEEKLY
10% DISCOUNT
FREE PLASTIC BAG FOR EACH COMIC
YOU PAY SHIPPING CHARGES

PLAN "D" - PREPAID
40 OR MORE BOOKS
SHIPPED TWICE A MONTH
10% DISCOUNT
FREE PLASTIC BAG FOR EACH COMIC
WE PAY SHIPPING

A SUM EQUAL TO OR EXCEEDING THE AMOUNT OF EACH ORDER TO BE SHIPPED, MUST BE RECEIVED BY US BEFORE SHIPMENT IS RELEASED.

MARVEL COMICS
- ALPHA FLIGHT
- AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
- AVENGERS
- CAPT. AMERICA
- CLOAK & DAGGER
- CONAN
- CONAN THE KING
- DAKOTA NORTH
- DAREDEVIL
- DAZZLER
- DEFENDERS, NEW (X-FAXTOR)
- DR. STRANGE
- DR. WHO
- ETERNALS
- FANTASTIC FOUR
- GI JOE
- GROO THE WANDERER
- HAWKEYE & THE WEST COAST AVENGERS
- HERO
- INCREDIBLE HULK
- INDIANA JONES
- IRONMAN
- KULL
- MARVEL AGE (NEWS)
- MARVEL FANFARE
- MARVEL INDEX
- MARVEL TALES
- MICRONAUTS
- MOON KNIGHT
- NEW MUTANTS
- NICK FURY VS. SHIELD
- PETER PARKER
- POWERMAN & IRONFIST
- POWER PACK
- RED SONJA
- ROM: SPACE KNIGHT
- SECRET WARS II
- STAR WARS
- THING
- THOR
- TRANSFORMERS
- VISION & SCARLET WITCH
- WEB OF SPIDER-MAN
- X-MEN

MARVEL STAR COMICS
- CRISTY
- EWOKS
- FRAGGLE ROCK
- HEATHCLIFF
- MUPPET BABIES
- PETER PORKER
- PLANET TERRY
- ROYAL ROY
- STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE
- WALLY THE WIZARD

MARVEL MAGAZINES
- EPIC ILLUSTRATED
- SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN

EPIC
- ALIEN LEGION
- BOZZ CHRONICLES
- DREADSTAR
- ELFQUEST

DC COMICS
- ACTION
- ALL-STAR SQUADRON
- AMETHYST
- ARAK
- ARION
- ATARI FORCE
- BATMAN
- BATMAN & OUTSIDERS
- BLUE DEVIL
- CRISIS/INFINITE EARTHS
- DC CHALLENGE
- DC PRESENTS
- DETECTIVE
- ELECTRIC WARRIOR
- FLASH
- FURY OF FIRESTORM
- GI COMBAT
- GREEN LANTERN
- INFINITY, INC.
- JUSTICE LEAGUE
- LEGION SUPERHEROES-BAXTER
- 'MAZING MAN
- NEW TEEN TITANS-BAXTER
- OMEGA MEN
- SECRET ORIGINS
- SGT. ROCK
- STAR TREK
- SUPERMAN
- SWAMP THING
- TALENT SHOWCASE
- TALES OF THE LEGION
- TALES OF THE TEEN TITANS
- V
- VIGILANTE
- WARLORD
- WHO'S WHO
- WONDER WOMAN
- WORLD'S FINEST

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM
- CEREBUS

ARCHIE COMICS
- ALL HUMOR TITLES

EAGLE COMICS
- EAGLE WEEKLY (UK)
- JUDGE DREDD
- 2000 A.D.WEEKLY (UK)

ECLIPSE
- AZTEC ACE
- DNAGENTS
- ZOT

FIRST
- AMERICAN FLAGG
- BADGER
- E-MAN
- GRIMJACK
- JON SABLE
- NEXUS
- STARSLAYER

FANZINES/MAGAZINES
- AMAZING HEROES
- COMICS COLLECTOR
- COMICS INTERVIEW
- COMICS JOURNAL
- COMICS REVIEW
- DR. WHO MONTHLY
- FANGORIA
- LOCUS (SF NEWS)
- SF MOVIELAND
- STARBURST
- STARLOG

CONTINUING PAPERBACKS
- DR.WHO

A COMICS INTERVIEW PUBLICATION

ON SALE NOW

#1 SUPER TEAM OF THE SOUTH!

Southern Knights™